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THE

CHILD AT HOME;

OR,

THE PRINCIPLES OF FILIAL DUTY FAMILIARLY ILLUSTRATED.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT,

AUTHOR OF

"THE MOTHER AT HOME," "JOSEPHINE," "MARIA ANTOINETTE."
"KINGS AND QUEENS," "NAPOLEON," ETC.

VERY GREATLY IMPROVED AND ENLARGED

With numerous Engravings.

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PREFACE.

The Mother at Home, and its companion and counterpart, the Child at Home, were written simply with the view of affording to mothers in the common walks of life, plain and simple instruction in respect to the right discharge of their maternal duties, and, at the same time, some practical aid in leading the minds of their children to proper views of their obligations to God, to their parents, and to one another. Although one of the volumes is addressed nominally to the mother, and the other to the child, they are in fact each intended for both mothers and children. If a parent reads and explains the Mother at Home to her children, they will derive great benefit from the exercise, as they will thus be taught to realize something of the nature and the weight of the responsibilities, the duties, and the cares which such a trust as that which is

committed to a mother necessarily brings. They will thus the more readily acquiesce in the measures adopted for their good, and submit to the authority which ought to be exercised over them; and they may be expected also to imbibe, in some degree, the Christian spirit which the book inculcates. On the other hand, the CHILD AT HOME is intended quite as much to afford to mothers a practical exemplification of the spirit and manner by which their instructions to their children should be characterized, as to act directly upon the children themselves; and its effect even in this last point of view will be greatly enhanced, if the mother, instead of giving her children the book, should read it to them herself, or allow them to read it aloud to her, chapter by chapter, at some calm and silent hour, in the evening or upon the Sabbath, when the hearts of the listeners may be open to salutary impressions, and when the instructions of the printed page may be accompanied by the kind and familiar explanations of the living teacher.

The volumes thus, though under different names, aim at one and the same end, and are intended as the counterparts and companions of each other.

They regard the family as one,—and in explaining and enforcing the relative duties of parents and children, they are intended to exert upon the two classes for which they are designed, a common and simultaneous influence.

Since the original publication of these works, they have been translated into many different languages, and have been circulated very extensively throughout the Christian world. The favor with which they have thus been regarded has led to the republication of them at this time in a new and greatly improved form. The works have been carefully revised, and much enlarged, and the various scenes and incidents described in them are illustrated with numerous engravings, which, it is hoped, will aid in making them attractive both to parents and children.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Responsibility,	11
II.	Deception,	37
III.	Obedience,	58
IV.	Gratitude,	94
V.	Conscientiousness,	115
VI.	Religious Truth,	139
VII.	The Savior,	169
VIII.	Every-day Duty,	205
IX.	Study,	240
X.	Traits of Character,	264
XI.	Traits of Character—continued,	285
XII.	Conclusion,	307

ENGRAVINGS.

PAGE

The Court, ... 11
The Pirates, ... 22
The Cell, ... 25
The Stolen Visit, ... 41
The Cake, ... 52
The Party, ... 63
The Prison, ... 68
Casabianca, ... 79
Watchful Care, ... 100
Helplessness, ... 106
The Robbery, ... 129
The Voyage, ... 140
The Lost Child, ... 160
Child Found, ... 163
Coasting, ... 174
The Letter, ... 190
The Greenlander, ... 193
The Play-ground, ... 216
The Duel, ... 223
The Handcartman, ... 255
The Sailor Boy, ... 261
The Orchard, ... 265
The Gun, ... 276
Mischief, ... 296
Leaving Home, ... 308
The Hotel, ... 315



THE CHILD AT HOME.

CHAPTER I.

RESPONSIBILITY.

In large cities there are so many persons guilty of crimes, that it is necessary to have a court in session every day to try those who are accused of breaking the laws. This court

is called the Police Court. If you should go into the room where it is held, you would see the officers bringing in, one after another, miserable and wicked creatures to be tried; and after the officers had stated and proved the crimes charged against them, the judge would command them to be led away to prison. In going away, they would look so wretched that you would be shocked in seeing them.

One morning a poor woman came into the Police Court in Boston. Her eyes were red with weeping, and she seemed to be borne down with sorrow. Behind her followed two men, leading in her daughter.

"Here, sir," said a man to the judge, "is a girl who conducts so badly that her mother can not live with her, and she must be sent to the House of Correction."

"My good woman," said the judge, "what is it that your daughter does which renders it so uncomfortable to live with her?"

"Oh, sir," she replied, "it is hard for a mother to accuse her own daughter, and to be the means of sending her to the prison. But she conducts in such a manner as to destroy all the peace of my life. She has such a temper, that she sometimes threatens to kill me, and she does every thing to make my life wretched."

The unhappy woman could say no more. Her heart seemed bursting with grief, and she wept aloud. The heart of the judge was moved with pity, and the bystanders could hardly refrain from weeping with this afflicted mother. But there stood the hard-hearted girl, unmoved. She looked upon the sorrows of her parent in sullen silence. She was so hardened in sin, that she seemed perfectly insensible to pity or affection. And yet she was miserable. Her countenance showed that passion and malignity filled her heart, and that the thought of the prison, to which she knew she must go, filled her with rage.

The judge turned from the afflicted mother, the sounds of whose sobs filled the room, and, asking a few questions of the witnesses, who testified to the daughter's ingratitude and cruelty, ordered her to be led away to the House of Correction. The officers of justice took her by the arm, and conducted her to her gloomy cell. Her lonely and sorrowing mother went weeping home to her abode of penury and desolation. Her own daughter was the viper which had stung her bosom. Her own child was the wretch who was filling her heart with sorrow.

And while I now write, this guilty daughter

is occupying the gloomy cell of the prison, and this widowed mother is in her silent dwelling, in loneliness and grief! And oh, if you, who read these pages, could see that mother and that daughter now, you might form some feeble idea of the consequences of disobedience; you might see how unutterable is the sorrow which a wicked child may bring upon herself and upon her parents. It is not easy, in this case, to judge which is the most unhappy, the mother or the child. The mother is broken-hearted at home. She is alone and friendless. All her hopes are most cruelly destroyed. She loved her daughter, and hoped that she would live to be her friend and comfort. But instead of that, she became her curse, and is bringing her mother's gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. And then look at the daughter—guilty and abandoned—oh, who can tell how miserable she must be!

Such is the grief which children may bring upon themselves and their parents. You probably have never thought of this very much. I write this book that you may think of it, and that you may, by obedience and affection, make your parents happy, and be happy yourselves.

This wicked girl was once a playful child, innocent and happy. Her mother looked upon

her with most ardent love, and hoped that her dear daughter would live to be her companion and friend. At first she ventured to disobey in some trifling thing. She still loved her mother, and would have been struck with horror at the thought of being guilty of the crimes which she afterward committed. But she went on from bad to worse, every day growing more disobedient, until she made her poor mother so miserable that she almost wished to die, and till she became so miserable herself, that life must have been a burden. You think, perhaps, that you never shall be so unkind and wicked as she finally became. But if you begin as she began, by trifling disobedience, and little acts of unkindness, you may soon be as wicked as she, and make your parents as unhappy as is her poor broken-hearted mother.

Persons never become so very wicked all at once. They go on from step to step, in disobedience and ingratitude, till they lose all feeling, and can see their parents weep, and even die in their grief, without a tear.

Perhaps, one pleasant day, this mother sent her little daughter to school. She took her books, and walked along, admiring the beautiful sunshine, and the green and pleasant fields. She stopped one moment to gather a flower,

again to pursue a butterfly, and again to listen to a little robin, pouring out its clear notes upon the bough of some lofty tree. It seemed so pleasant to be playing in the fields, that she was unwilling to go promptly to school. She thought it would not be *very wrong* to play a *little while.* Thus she commenced. The next day she ventured to chase the butterflies farther, and to rove more extensively through the fields in search of flowers. And as she played by the pebbles in the clear brook of rippling water, she forgot how fast the time was passing. And when she afterward hastened to school, and was asked why she was so late, to conceal her fault she was guilty of falsehood, and said that her mother wanted her at home. Thus she advanced rapidly in crime. Her lessons were neglected. She loved the fields better than her book, and would often spend the whole morning idle, under the shade of some tree, when her mother thought her safe in school. Having thus become a truant and a deceiver, she was prepared for any crimes. Good children would not associate with her, and consequently she had to choose the worst for her companions and her friends. She learned wicked language ; she was rude and vulgar in her manners ; she indulged ungovernable passion ; and at last grew

so bad, that when her family afterward removed to the city, the House of Correction became her ignominious home. And there she is now, guilty and wretched. And her poor mother, in her solitary dwelling, is weeping over her daughter's disgrace. Who can comfort such a mother? Where is there any earthly joy to which she can look?

Children generally do not think how much the happiness of their parents depends upon their conduct. But you now see how very unhappy you can make them. And is there a child who reads this book, who would be willing to be the cause of sorrow to his father and his mother? After all that they have done for you, in taking care of you when an infant, in watching over you when sick, in giving you clothes to wear, and food to eat, can you be so ungrateful as to make them unhappy? You have all read the story of the kind man, who found a viper lying upon the ground almost dead with cold. He took it up and placed it in his bosom to warm it, and to save its life. And what did that viper do? He killed his benefactor! Vile, vile reptile! Yes! as soon as he was warm and well, he stung the bosom of his kind preserver, and killed him.

But that child is a worse viper who, by his

ingratitude, will sting the bosom of his father or mother; who by disobedience and unkindness, will destroy their peace, and thus dreadfully repay them for all their love and care. God will not forget the sins of such a child. His eye will follow you to see your sin, and his arm will reach you to punish. He has said, Honor your father and your mother. And the child who does not do this, must meet with the displeasure of God, and must be forever shut out from heaven. Oh, how miserable must this wicked girl now be, locked up in the gloomy prison! But how much more miserable will she be when God calls her to account for all her sins!—when, in the presence of all the angels, the whole of her conduct is brought to light, and God says to her, "Depart from me, ye cursed!" As she goes away from the presence of the Lord, to the gloomy prisons of eternal despair, she will then feel a degree of remorse which I can not describe to you. It is painful to think of it. Ah, wretched, wretched girl! Little are you aware of the woes which you are preparing for yourself. I hope that no child who reads these pages will ever feel these woes.

You have just read that it is in your power to make your parents very unhappy; and you have seen how unhappy one wicked girl made

her poor mother. I might tell you many such melancholy stories, all of which would be true. A few years ago there was a boy who began to be disobedient to his parents in little things. But every day he grew worse,—more disobedient, more willful, and more troublesome. He would run away from school, and thus he grew up in ignorance. He associated with bad boys, and learned to swear and to lie, and to steal. He became so bad that his parents could do nothing with him. Every body who knew him, said, "That boy is preparing for the gallows." He was the pest of the neighborhood.

At last he ran away from home, without letting his parents know that he was going. He had heard of the sea, and thought it would be a very pleasant thing to be a sailor. But nothing is pleasant to the wicked. When he came to the sea-shore, where there were a large number of ships, it was some time before any captain would employ him, because he knew nothing about a ship or the sea. There was no one there who was his friend, or who pitied him, and he sat down and cried bitterly, wishing that he was at home again, but ashamed to go back. At last a sea captain came along, and hired him to go on a distant voyage; and as he knew nothing about the rigging of a vessel, he was

ordered to do the most servile work on board. He swept the decks and the cabin, and helped the cook, and was the servant of all. He had the poorest food to eat he ever ate in his life. And when night came, and he was so tired that he could hardly stand, he had no soft bed upon which to lie, but could only wrap a blanket around him, and throw himself down anywhere to get a little sleep.

This unhappy boy had acquired so sour a disposition, and was so disobliging, that all the sailors disliked him, and would do every thing they could to tease him. When there was a storm, and he was pale with fear, and the vessel was rocking in the wind, and pitching over the waves, they would make him climb the mast, and laugh to see how terrified he was, as the mast reeled to and fro, and the wind almost blew him into the raging ocean. Often did this poor boy get into some obscure part of the ship, and weep as he thought of the home he had forsaken. He thought of his father and mother, how kind they had been to him, and how unkind and ungrateful he had been to them, and how unhappy he had made them by his misconduct. But these feelings soon wore away. Familiarity with sea-life gave him courage, and he became inured to its hardships.

Constant intercourse with the most profligate and abandoned, gave strength and inveteracy to his sinful habits; and before the voyage had terminated, he was reckless of danger, and as hardened and unfeeling as the most depraved on board the ship. This boy commenced with disobedience in little things, and grew worse and worse, till he forsook his father and his mother, and was prepared for the surrender of every virtuous principle, and the commission of any crime. But the eye of God was upon him, following him wherever he went, and marking all his iniquities. An hour of retribution was approaching. It is not necessary for me to trace out to you his continued steps of progress in sin. When on shore, he passed his time in haunts of dissipation. And several years rolled on in this way, he himself growing more and more hardened, and his aged parents, in their loneliness, weeping over the ruin of their guilty and wandering son.

One day an armed vessel sailed into one of the principal ports of the United States, accompanied by another, which had been captured. When they arrived at the wharf, it was found that the vessel taken was a pirate. Multitudes flocked down upon the wharf to see the pirates as they should be led off to the

prison, there to await their trial. Soon they were brought out of the ship, with their hands



THE PIRATES.

astened together with chains, and led through the streets. Ashamed to meet the looks of honest men, and terrified with the certainty of condemnation and execution, they walked along with downcast eyes and trembling limbs. Among the number was seen the unhappy and guilty boy, now grown to be a young man, whose history we are relating. He was locked

up in the dismal dungeon of a prison. The day of trial came. Pale and trembling, he was brought before the judge. He was clearly proved guilty, and sentenced to be hung. Again he was carried back to his prison, there to remain till the hour for his execution should arrive. News was sent to his already broken-hearted parents, that their son had been condemned as a pirate, and was soon to be hung. The tidings were almost too much for them to endure. In an agony of feeling which can not be described, they wept together. They thought of the hours of their child's infancy, when they watched over him in sickness, and soothed him to sleep. They thought how happy they felt when they saw the innocent smile play upon his childish cheek. They thought of the joy they then anticipated in his opening years, and of the comfort which they hoped he would be to them in their declining days. And now to think of him, a hardened criminal, in the murderer's cell!—Oh, it was too much, too much for them to bear. It seemed as though their hearts would burst. Little did they think, when, with so much affection they caressed their infant child, that he would be the curse of their life, embittering all their days, and bringing down their gray hairs

with sorrow to the grave. Little did they think, that his first trifling acts of disobedience would lead on to such a career of misery and of crime. But the son was sentenced to die, and the penalty of the law could not be avoided. His own remorse and his parents' tears could be of no avail. Agonizing as it would be to their feelings, they felt that they must go and see their son before he should die.

What a hard alternative it was that was presented to these heart-broken parents! It was a dreadful thing to leave him alone in his cell, and it would he a dreadful thing to go to see him. They, however, decided to go.

One morning, a gray-headed man, and an aged and infirm woman, were seen walking along, with faltering footsteps, through the street which led to the prison. It was the heart-broken father and mother of this unnatural child. When they came in sight of the gloomy granite walls and iron-grated windows of this dreary abode, they could hardly proceed, so overwhelming were the feelings which pressed upon their minds. When arrived at the door of the prison, the aged father, supporting upon his arm the weeping and almost fainting mother, told the jailer who they were, and requested

permission to see their son. Even the jailer, accustomed as he was to scenes of suffering, could not witness this exhibition of parental grief without being moved to tears. He led the parents through the stone galleries of the prison, till they came to the iron door of the cell in which their son was confined. As he turned the key with all his strength, the heavy bolt flew back, and he opened the door of the cell. Oh, what a sight for a father and a mother to gaze upon! There was just enough light in this gloomy abode to show them their son, sitting in the corner on the stone floor, pale and emaciated, and loaded with chains. The moment the father beheld the pallid features of his long-absent son, he raised his hands in the agony of his feelings, and fell fainting at his feet. The mother burst into loud exclamations of grief, as she clasped her son, guilty and wretched as he was, to her



THE CELL.

bosom. Oh, who can describe this scene! Who can conceive the anguish which wrung the hearts of these afflicted parents! And it was their own boy, whom they had loved and cherished, who had brought all this woe upon them.

I can not describe to you the scene which ensued. Even the very jailer could not bear it, and he wept aloud. At last he was compelled to tear the parents away; and it was agonizing indeed to leave their son in such a situation, soon to be led to an ignominious death. They would gladly have stayed and died with their guilty child. But it was necessary that they should depart; and, the jailer having closed the door and turned the massive bolt, they left the unhappy criminal in his cell. Oh, what would he have given, again to be innocent and free! The parents returned to their home, to weep by day and by night, and to have the image of their guilty son disturbing every moment of peace, and preventing the possibility of joy. The day of execution soon arrived, and their son was led to the gallows, and lanched into eternity. And, crimsoned with guilt, he went to the bar of God, there to answer for all the crimes of which he had been guilty, and for all the woes that he had caused.

You see, then, how great are your responsibilities as a child. You have thought, perhaps, that you have no power over your parents, and that you are not accountable for the sorrow which your conduct may cause them. Think you that God will hold this child guiltless for all the sorrow which he caused his father and his mother? And think you that God will hold any child guiltless, who shall, by his misconduct, make his parents unhappy? No. You must answer to God for every thing that you do, which gives your parents pain. And there is no sin greater in the sight of God than that of an ungrateful child. I have shown you, in the two illustrations which you have just read, how much the happiness of your parents depends upon your conduct. Every day you are promoting their joy or their sorrow. And every act of disobedience, or of ingratitude, however trifling it may appear to you, is, in the eyes of your Maker, a sin which can not pass unnoticed.

Do you ask, Why does God consider the ingratitude of children as a sin of peculiar aggravation? I reply, Because you are under peculiar obligation to love and obey your parents. They have loved you when you could not love them. They have taken care of you when you could not reward them. They have passed

sleepless nights in listening to your cries, and weary days in watching over you, when you could neither express thanks nor feel grateful. And after they have done all this, is it a small sin for you to disobey them and make them unhappy?

And indeed you can do nothing to make *yourself* so unhappy as to indulge in disobedience, and to cherish a spirit of ingratitude. You never see a child who does this, happy. Look at him at home, and you will find that instead of being light-hearted and cheerful, he is sullen and morose. He sits down by the fireside in a winter evening, but the evening fireside affords no joy to him. He knows that his parents are grieved at his conduct. He loves nobody, and feels that nobody loves him. There he sits, silent and sad, making himself miserable by his own misconduct. The disobedient boy or girl is always unhappy. You know how different the dispositions of children are. Some are always pleasant and obliging, and you love their company. They seem happy when they are with you, and they make you happy. Now you will almost always find that such children are obedient to their parents. They are happy at home, as well as abroad. God has in almost every case connected enjoyment with duty, and

sorrow with sin. But in no case is this connection more intimate, than in the duty which children owe their parents. And to every child who reads this book, I would say, *If you wish to be happy, you must be good.* Always remember this. Let no temptation induce you for a moment to disobey. The more ardently you love your parents, the more ardently will they love you. But if you are ungrateful and disobedient, childhood will pass away in sorrow; all the virtuous will dislike you, and you will have no friends worth possessing. When you arrive at mature age, and enter upon the active duty of life, you will have acquired those feelings which will deprive you of the affection of your fellow-beings, and you will probably go through the world unbeloved and unrespected. Can you be willing so to live?

The following account, written by one who, many years after her mother's death, visited her grave, forcibly describes the feelings which the remembrance of the most trifling act of ingratitude will, under such circumstances, awaken.

"It was thirteen years since my mother's death, when, after a long absence from my native village, I stood beside the sacred mound, beneath which I had seen her buried. Since

that mournful period, a great change had come over me. My childish years had passed away, and with them my youthful character. The world was altered too; and as I stood at my mother's grave, I could hardly realize that I was the same thoughtless, happy creature, whose cheeks she so often kissed in an excess of tenderness. But the varied events of thirteen years had not effaced the remembrance of that mother's smile. It seemed as if I had seen her but yesterday—as the blessed sound of her well-remembered voice was in my ear. The gay dreams of my infancy and childhood were brought back so distinctly to my mind, that, had it not been for one bitter recollection, the tears that I shed would have been gentle and refreshing. The circumstance may seem a trifling one, but the thought of it now pains my heart, and I relate it, in order that those children who have parents to love them may learn to value them as they ought.

"My mother had been ill a long time, and I became so accustomed to her pale face and weak voice, that I was not frightened at them, as children usually are. At first, it is true, I sobbed violently; but when, day after day, I returned from school, and found her the same, I began to believe that she would always be

spared to me. But they told me she would die.

"One day, when I had lost my place in the class, and had done my work wrong side outward, I came home discouraged and fretful. I went to my mother's chamber. She was paler than usual, but she met me with the same affectionate smile that always welcomed my return. Alas, when I look back through the lapse of thirteen years, I think my heart must have been of stone not to have been melted by it. She requested me to go down stairs and bring her a glass of water. I pettishly asked why she did not call a domestic to do it. With a look of mild reproach, which I shall never forget, if I live to be a hundred years old, she said, 'And will not my daughter bring a glass of water for her poor sick mother?'

"I went and brought her the water, but I did not do it kindly. Instead of smiling and kissing her, as I was wont to do, I set the glass down very quickly, and left the room. After playing about a short time, I went to bed without bidding my mother good night. But when alone in my room, in darkness and in silence, I remembered how pale she looked, and how her voice trembled when she said, 'Will not my daughter bring a glass of water for her poor

sick mother?' I could not sleep. I stole into her chamber to ask forgiveness. She had sunk into an easy slumber, and they told me that I must not waken her. I did not tell any one what troubled me, but stole back to my bed, resolved to rise early in the morning, and tell her how sorry I was for my conduct.

"The sun was shining bright when I awoke; and, hurrying on my clothes, I hastened to my mother's chamber. She was dead! She never spoke more—never smiled upon me again—and when I touched the hand that used to rest upon my head in blessing, it was so cold that it made me shudder. I bowed down by her side, and sobbed in the bitterness of my heart. I thought then that I might well wish to die, and be buried with her; and, old as I now am, I would give worlds, were they mine to give, could my mother but have lived to tell me that she forgave my childish ingratitude. But I can not call her back; and when I stand by her grave, and whenever I think of her manifold kindness, the memory of that reproachful look which she gave me will bite like a serpent and sting like an adder."

And when your mother dies, do you not think that you will feel remorse for every unkind word that you have uttered, and for every

act of ingratitude? Your beloved parents must soon die. You will probably be led into their darkened chamber, to see them lying pale and helpless on their dying bed. Oh, how will you feel in that solemn hour! All your past life will come to your mind, and you will think that you would give worlds, if you could blot out the remembrance of past ingratitude. You will think that, if your father or mother should only get well, you would never do any thing to grieve them again. But the hour for them to die must come. You may weep as though your heart would break, but it will not recall the past, and it will not delay their death. They must die; and you will probably gaze upon their cold and lifeless countenances in the coffin. You will follow them to the grave, and see them buried forever from your sight. Oh, how unhappy you will feel, if you then have to reflect upon your misconduct! The tears that you will shed over their graves will be the more bitter, because you will feel that, perhaps, your own misconduct hastened their death.

But perhaps you will die before your parents do. If you go into the grave-yard, you will see the graves of many children. You know that the young are liable to die, as well as the old. And what must be the feelings of the dying

child, who knows that he is going to appear before God in judgment, and yet feels conscious that he has been unkind to his parents! Oh, such a child must fear to go into the presence of his Maker. He must know that God will never receive into heaven children who have been so wicked. I have seen many children die. And I have seen some, who had been very amiable and pleasant all their lives, when they came to die, feel grieved that they had not been more careful to make their parents happy. I knew one affectionate little girl, who was loved by all who knew her. She very seldom did any thing which was displeasing to her parents. But one day she was taken sick. The physician was called; but she grew worse and worse. Her parents watched over her with anxiety and tears, but still her fever raged, and death drew nearer. At last all hopes of her recovery were over, and it was known that she must die. Then did this little girl, when she felt that she must leave her parents forever, mourn that she had ever done any thing to give them pain. The most trifling act of disobedience, and the least unkindness of which she had ever been guilty, then came fresh into her mind, and she could not die in peace till she had called her father and her mother to her bedside,

and implored their forgiveness. If so obliging and affectionate a little girl as this felt so deeply in view of the past, when called upon to die, how agonizing must be the feelings which will crowd upon the heart of the wicked and disobedient child who has filled her parents' heart with sorrow!

But you must also remember that there is a day of judgment to come. You must appear before God to answer for everything you have done or thought while in this world. Oh, how will the ungrateful child then feel! Heaven will be before him, in all its beauty and bliss, but he can not enter.

> "Those holy gates forever bar
> Pollution, sin, and shame."

He has, by his ingratitude, made a home on earth unhappy, and God will not permit him to destroy the happiness of the homes in heaven.

He will see all the angels in their holiness and their joy, but he can not be permitted to join that blessed throng. With his ungrateful heart he would but destroy their enjoyment. The frown of God must be upon him, and he must depart to that wretched world where all the wicked are assembled. There he must live

in sorrows which have no end. Oh, children, how great are your responsibilities! The happiness of your parents depends upon your conduct. And your ingratitude may fill your lives with sorrow, and your eternity with woe. Will you not, then, read this book with care, and pray that God will aid you to obey its directions, that your homes on earth may be joyful, and that you may be prepared for happier homes beyond the stars?

CHAPTER II.

DECEPTION.

PROBABLY nearly all who read this book have heard the story of George Washington and his hatchet.

George, when a little boy, had received from his father a hatchet, and, much pleased with his present, he walked around the house trying its keen edge upon every thing which came within his reach. At last he came to a favorite pear-tree of his father's, and began, with great dexterity, to try his skill in felling trees. After hacking upon the bark until he had completely spoiled the tree, he became tired, and went into the house. Before long, his father, passing by, beheld his beautiful tree entirely ruined; and, entering the house, he earnestly asked who had been guilty of the act. For a moment George trembled and hesitated. He was strongly tempted to deny that he knew any thing about it. But summoning all his courage, he replied, "Father, I can not tell a lie. I cut it with my

hatchet." His father clasped him in his arms, and said, "My dear boy, I would rather lose a thousand trees than have my son a liar."

This little anecdote shows that George Washington, when a boy, was too brave and noble to tell a lie. He had rather be punished than be so mean and degraded as to utter a falsehood. He did wrong to cut the pear-tree, though, perhaps, he did not know the extent of the injury that he was doing. But had he denied that he did it, he would have been a cowardly and disgraceful liar. His father would have been ashamed of him, and would never have known when to believe him. If little George Washington had told a lie then, it is by no means improbable that he would have gone on from falsehood to falsehood, till every body would have despised him. And he would thus have become a disgrace to his parents and friends, instead of a blessing to his country and the world. No boy, who has any degree of that noble spirit which George Washington had, will tell a lie. It is one of the most degrading of sins. There is no one who does not regard a liar with contempt.

Almost always, when a lie is told, two sins are committed. The first is, the child has done something which he knows to be wrong. And the second is, that he has not courage enough

to admit it, and tells a lie to hide his fault. And, therefore, when a child tells a lie, you may always know that that child is a coward. George Washington was a brave man. When duty called him, he feared not to meet danger and death. He would march to the mouth of the cannon in the hour of battle; he would ride through the field when bullets were flying in every direction, and strewing the ground with the dead, and not a nerve would tremble. Now, we see that George Washington was brave when a boy, as well as when a man. He scorned to tell a lie, and, like a noble-hearted boy as he was, he honestly avowed the truth. Every body admires courage, and every body despises cowardice. The liar, whether he be a boy or a man, is looked upon with contempt.

Cases will occur in which you will be strongly tempted to say that which is false. But if you yield to the temptation, how can you help despising yourself? A little girl once came into the house and told her mother something which was very improbable. Those who were sitting in the room with her mother did not believe her, for they did not know the character of the little girl. But the mother replied at once, "I have no doubt that it is true, for I never knew my daughter to tell a lie." Is there not something

noble in having a character like this? Must not that girl have felt happy in the consciousness of thus possessing her mother's entire confidence? Oh, how different must have been her feelings from those of the child whose word can not be believed, and who is regarded by every one with suspicion! Shame, shame on the child who has not magnanimity enough to tell the truth.

God will not allow such sins to go unpunished. Even in this world the consequences are generally felt. God has given every person a conscience, which approves that which is right, and condemns that which is wrong. When we do any thing wrong, our consciences punish us for it, and we are unhappy. When we do any thing that is right, the approval of conscience is a reward. Every day you feel the power of this conscience approving or condemning what you do. Sometimes a person thinks that if he does wrong, and it is not found out, he will escape punishment. But it is not so. He will be punished whether it is found out or not. Conscience will punish him if no one else does.

There was once a boy whose father sent him to ride a few miles, on an errand, and directed him particularly not to stop by the way. It

was a beautiful and sunny morning in the spring; and as the boy rode along by the green fields, and heard the singing of the birds as they flew from tree to tree, he felt as light-hearted and happy as they. After doing his errand, however, as he was returning by the house where two of his friends and playmates lived, he thought he could not resist the temptation just to call a moment to see them. He thought that there would be no great harm if he merely stopped a minute or two, and his parents would



THE STOLEN VISIT.

never know it. Here commenced his sin. He stopped, and was led to remain longer and longer, till he found that he had passed two hours there in play. Then, with a troubled conscience, he mounted his horse, and set his face toward home. The fields looked as green, and the skies as bright and cloudless, as when he rode along in the morning; but, oh, how different were his feelings! Then he was innocent and happy; now he was guilty and wretched. He tried to feel easy, but he could not; conscience reproached him with his sin. He rode sadly along, thinking what excuse he should make to his parents for his long absence, when at length he saw his father, at a distance, coming to meet him. His father, fearing that some accident had happened, had left home in search of his son. The boy trembled and turned pale as he saw his father approaching, and hesitated whether he had better confess the truth at once, and ask forgiveness, or endeavor to hide the crime with a lie. Oh, how much better it would have been for him if he had acknowledged the truth! How much sooner would he have been restored to peace! But one sin almost always leads to another. When this kind father met his son with a smile, the boy said, "Father, I lost the road, and it took me some

time to get back again, and that is the reason why I have been gone so long."

His father had never known his son to be guilty of falsehood before, and was so happy to find him safe, that he did not doubt that what he said was true. But, oh, how guilty, and ashamed, and wretched, did the boy himself feel, as he rode along! His peace of mind was destroyed. A heavy weight of conscious guilt pressed upon his heart. He went home and repeated the lie to his mother. It is always thus when we turn from the path of duty; we know not how widely we shall wander. Having committed one fault, he told a lie to conceal it, and then added sin to sin, by repeating and persisting in his falsehood. What a change had one short half-day produced in the character and the happiness of this child! His parent had not yet detected him in his sin, but he was not, on that account, free from punishment. Conscience was at work, telling him that he was degraded and guilty. His look of innocence and his lightness of heart had left him. He was ashamed to look his father or mother in the face. He tried to appear easy and happy, but he was uneasy and miserable. A heavy load of conscious guilt rested upon him, which destroyed all his peace.

When he retired to bed that night, he feared the dark. It was long before he could quiet his troubled spirit with sleep. And when he awoke in the morning, the consciousness of his guilt had not forsaken him. There it remained fixed deep in his heart, and would allow him no peace. He was guilty, and of course wretched. The first thought which occurred to him, on waking, was the lie of the preceding day. He could not forget it. He was afraid to go into the room where his parents were, lest they should discover, by his appearance, that he had been doing something wrong. And though, as weeks passed away, the acuteness of his feelings in some degree abated, he was all the time disquieted and unhappy. He was continually fearing that something would occur which should lead to his detection.

Thus things went on for several weeks, till, one day, the gentleman at whose house he stopped, called at his father's on business. So soon as this boy saw him come into the house, his heart beat violently, and he turned pale with the fear that something would be said that would bring the whole truth to light. The gentleman, after conversing a few moments with his father, turned to the boy, and said,

"Well, how did you get home the other

day? My boys had a very pleasant visit from you."

Can you imagine how the boy felt? You could almost have heard his heart beat. The blood rushed into his face, and he could not speak; and he dared not raise his eyes from the floor.

The gentleman then turned to his parents, and said, "You must let your son come up again and see my boys. They were quite disappointed when he was there a few weeks ago, for he only stayed about two hours, and they hoped he had come to spend the whole day with them."

Thus the whole truth was brought out. And how do you suppose that boy felt? He had disobeyed his parents; told a lie to conceal it; had for weeks suffered the pangs of a guilty conscience; and now the whole truth was discovered. He stood before his parents overwhelmed with shame, convicted of disobedience, and mean, degrading falsehood.

This boy was all the time suffering the consequences of his sin. For many days he was enduring the reproaches of conscience, while the knowledge of his crime was confined to his own bosom. How bitterly did he suffer for the short period of forbidden pleasure which he

had enjoyed! The way of the transgressor is always hard. Every child who does wrong must, to a greater or less degree, feel the same sorrows. This guilty child, overwhelmed with confusion and disgrace, burst into tears, and implored his parents' forgiveness. But he was told by his parents that he had sinned, not only against them, but against God. The humble child went to God in penitence and in prayer. He made a full confession of all to his parents, and obtained their forgiveness; and it was not till then that peace of mind was restored.

Will not the child who reads this account take warning from it? Whenever you have done wrong, you had better confess it at once. Falsehood will but increase your sin, and aggravate your sorrow. Whenever you are tempted to say that which is untrue, look forward to the consequences. Think how much sorrow, and shame, and sin, you will bring upon yourself. Think of the reproaches of conscience; for you may depend upon it, that those reproaches are not easily borne.

And is it pleasant to have the reputation of a liar? When persons are detected in one falsehood, they can not be believed when they speak the truth. No person can place any more confidence in them till a long time of

penitence has elapsed in which they have had an opportunity to manifest their amendment. The little boy, whose case we have above alluded to, was sincerely penitent for his sin. He resolved that he never would tell another lie. But since he had deceived his parents once, their confidence in him was necessarily for a time destroyed. They could judge of the reality of his penitence only by his future conduct. One day he was sent to a store to purchase some small articles for his mother. In his haste, he forgot to stop for the few cents of change which he ought to have received. Upon his return home, his mother inquired for the change. He had not thought about it before, and very frankly told her that he had forgotten it entirely. How did his mother know that he was telling the truth? She had already detected him in one falsehood, and she feared that he was now telling her another. "I hope, my dear son," she said, "you are not again deceiving me." The boy was perfectly honest this time, and his parents had never before distrusted his word. It almost broke his heart to be thus suspected, but he felt that it was just, and he went to his chamber and wept bitterly.

These are the necessary consequences of falsehood. A liar can never be believed. It

matters not whether he tells truth or falsehood, no one can trust his word. If you are ever tempted to tell a lie therefore, first ask yourself whether you are willing to have it said that nobody can trust your word. The liar is always known to be such. A person may possibly tell a lie which shall not be detected, but almost always something happens which brings it to light. The boy who stopped to play when on an errand two miles from his father's house, thought that his falsehood would never be discovered. But he was detected, and overwhelmed with shame.

It is impossible for a person who is in the habit of uttering untruths to escape detection. Your character for truth or falsehood will be known. And what can be more humiliating and degrading than to have the name of a liar? It is so considered in all nations and with all people. It is considered one of the meanest and most cowardly vices of which one can be guilty. The liar is always a coward. He tells lies, because he is afraid to tell the truth.

And how do you suppose the liar must feel when he comes to die? It is a solemn hour. Perhaps many of the children who read this book have never seen a person die? I have seen many. I have seen children of all ages

dressed in the shroud and placed in the coffin. I might write pages in describing to you such scenes. One day I went to see a girl about ten years of age, who was very sick. When I went into the room, she was lying upon a little cot-bed, her lips parched with fever, and her face pale and emaciated with suffering. Her mother was standing by her bedside, weeping as though her heart would break. Other friends were standing around, looking in vain for something to do to relieve the little sufferer. I went and took her by the hand, and found that she was dying. She raised her languid eyes to me, but could not speak. Her breathing grew fainter and fainter. Her arms and limbs grew cold. We could only look mournfully on and see the advances of death, without being able to do any thing to stop its progress. At last she ceased to breathe. Her spirit ascended to God to be judged, and her body remained upon the bed, a cold and lifeless corpse. All children are exposed to death; and when you least expect it, you may be called to lie upon a bed of sickness, and go down to the grave. There is nothing to give one joy in such an hour, but a belief that our sins are forgiven, and that we are going to the heavenly home. But how must a child feel in such an

hour, when reflecting upon falsehoods which are recorded in God's book of remembrance! Death is terrible to the impenitent sinner; but it is a messenger of love and of mercy to those who are prepared to die. If you have been guilty of a falsehood, you can not die in peace till you have repented and obtained forgiveness.

There was once a little girl who died when she was eleven years of age. She loved the Savior; and when she was told that she could not live, she was very happy. She said that she was happy to die, and go home and be with her Savior and the angels in heaven. But there was one thing, which, for a time, weighed heavily upon her mind. A year or two before she felt interested in religion she had told what she considered an untruth to her aunt; and she could not die in peace, till she had seen that aunt, confessed her sin, and asked forgiveness. Her aunt was sent for, though she was many miles distant. When her aunt came, the sick little girl, with sorrow for her fault, made confession, and asked forgiveness. "Aunt," said she, "I have prayed to God, and hope that he has forgiven me; and I can not die in peace till I have obtained your forgiveness." If any child who reads this book is tempted to deceive

his parents or his friends, I hope he will remember that he must soon die, and think how he will feel in that solemn hour.

But, perhaps, you think that the falsehood of which this girl was guilty was one of peculiar aggravation. It was simply this: she was one day playing in the room with several little children, and was making them laugh very loud. Her aunt said, "My dear, you must not make them laugh so loud."

And she replied, "It is not I, aunt, who makes them laugh."

This was the falsehood she uttered. And though her aunt did not know that it was false, the little girl did, and God in heaven did. And when she came to die, though it was a year or two after, her soul was troubled, and the consciousness of her sin destroyed her peace. A lie is, in the sight of God, a dreadful sin, be it ever so trifling in our estimation. When we are just ready to leave the world, and to appear before God in judgment, the convictions of a guilty conscience will press upon the heart like a heavy burden.

There are many ways of being guilty of falsehood without uttering the lie direct in words. Whenever you try to deceive your parents, in doing that which you know they

disapprove, you do, in reality, tell a lie. Conscience reproves you for falsehood. Once, when I was in company, as the plate of cake was passed round, a little boy, who sat by the side of his mother, took a much larger piece than he knew she would allow him to have. She happened, for the moment, to be looking away, and he broke a small piece off, and covered the rest in his lap with his handkerchief. When his mother looked, she saw the small piece, and supposed that he had taken no more. He intended to deceive her. His mother has never found out what he did. But God saw him, and frowned upon him, as he committed this sin. And do you not think that the boy has already suffered for it? Must he not feel mean and degraded whenever he thinks that, merely to get a piece of cake, he would deceive his kind mother? If that boy had any honorable or generous feeling remaining in his



THE CAKE.

bosom, he would feel reproached and unhappy whenever he thought of his meanness. If he was already dead to shame, it would show that he had by previous deceit acquired this character. And can any one love or esteem a child who has become so degraded? And can a child, who is neither beloved nor respected, be happy? No! You may depend upon it, that when you see a person guilty of such deceit, he does in some way or other, even in this world, suffer a severe penalty. A frank and open-hearted child is the only happy child. Deception, however skillfully it may be practiced, is disgraceful, and insures sorrow and contempt. If you would have the approbation of your own conscience, and the approval of friends, never do that which you shall desire to have concealed. Always be open as the day. Be above deceit, and then you will have nothing to fear. There is something delightful in the magnanimity of a perfectly sincere and honest child. No person can look upon such a one without affection. If you have such a character you are sure of friends, and your prospects of earthly usefulness and happiness are bright.

But we must not forget that there is a day of most solemn judgment near at hand. When you die, your body will be wrapped in the

shroud, and placed in the coffin, and buried in the grave; and there it will remain and molder to the dust, while the snows of unnumbered winters, and the tempests of unnumbered summers, shall rest upon the cold earth which covers you.

But your spirit will not be there. Far away, beyond the cloudless skies, and blazing suns, and twinkling stars, it will have gone to judgment. How awful must be the scene which will open before you, as you enter the eternal world! You will see the throne of God: how bright, how glorious, will it burst upon your sight! You will see God the Savior seated upon that majestic throne. Angels, in numbers more than can be counted, will fill the universe with their glittering wings, and their rapturous songs.

Oh, what a scene to behold! And then you will stand in the presence of this countless throng to answer for every thing you have done while you lived. Every action and every thought of your life will then be fresh in your mind. You know it is written in the Bible, "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." How must the child then feel who has been guilty of falsehood and de-

ception, and has it then all brought to light! No liar can enter the kingdom of heaven. Oh, how dreadful must be the confusion and shame with which the deceitful child will then be overwhelmed! The angels will all see your sin and your disgrace. And do you think they will wish to have a liar enter heaven, to be associated with them? No! They must turn from you with great displeasure. The Savior will look upon you in displeasure too. Conscience will rend your soul. And you must hear the awful sentence, "Depart from me, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Oh, it is a dreadful thing to practice deceit. It will shut you from heaven. It will confine you in eternal woe. Though you should escape detection as long as you live; though you should die, and your falsehood not be discovered, the time will soon come when it will all be brought to light, and when the whole universe of men and of angels will be witnesses of your shame. If any child who reads this feels condemned for past deceptions, oh, beware, and do not postpone repentance till the day of judgment shall arrive. Go at once to those whom you have deceived, and make confession, and implore forgiveness. Then go to

your Savior, fall upon your knees before him; pray that he will pardon you, and promise to sin no more. If your prayer is offered in sincerity, and your resolution remains unbroken, the Savior will forgive you; and when the trump of the archangel shall summon you to judgment, he will give you a home in heaven. The tear of sincere penitence our kind Savior is ever ready to accept.

If you are ever tempted to deceive, O, remember, that your deception must soon be known. It is utterly impossible that it should long remain undetected. When the day of judgment arrives, your heart will be open to the view of the universe, and every thought will be publicly known. How much safer then is it to be sincere and honest! Strive to preserve your heart free from guile. Then you will have peace of conscience. You will fear no detection. You can lie down at night in peace. You can awake in the morning with joy. Trusting in the Savior for acceptance, you can die happy. And when the morning of the resurrection dawns upon you, your heart will be filled with a joy which earth's sunniest mornings and brightest skies never could afford. The Savior will smile upon you. Angels will welcome you to heaven. You will rove, in in-

expressible delight, through the green pastures of that blissful abode. You will lie down by the still waters where there is sweet repose forever. Oh, what an hour of bliss must that be, when the child, saved from sin and sorrow,

"Has reached the shore
Where tempests never beat nor billows roar!"

CHAPTER III.

OBEDIENCE.

In the chapters which you have now read, I have endeavored to show you how much your own happiness, and that of your parents, depend upon your conduct. And I trust that every child who has read what I have written thus far, has resolved to do all in his power to promote the happiness of those who have been so kind to him. But you will find that it is a very different thing to resolve to do your duty, from what it is to perform your resolutions when the hour of temptation comes. It requires courage and firmness to do right, when you are surrounded by those who urge you to do wrong. Temptations to do wrong will be continually arising; and, unless you have the resolution to brave ridicule, and to refuse solicitation, you will be continually led into trouble.

I knew a young man who was ruined entirely, because he had not courage enough to say no. He was, when a boy, very amiable in

his disposition, and did not wish to make any person unhappy; but he had no mind of his own, and could be led about by his associates into almost any difficulties, or any sins. If, in a clear moonlight winter evening, his father gave him leave to go out of doors, and slide down the hill for half an hour, he would resolve to be obedient and return home at the time appointed. But if there were other boys there to try to persuade him to remain longer, he had not the courage to refuse them. And thus he would disobey his kind parents because he had not courage to do his duty. He began in this way, and so he continued. One day, a bad boy asked him to go into a store, and drink some brandy. He knew that it was wrong, and did not wish to go. But he feared that, if he did not consent, he would be laughed at; and so he went. Having thus yielded to this temptation, he was less prepared for temptation again. He went to the bottle with one and another, till at last he became intemperate, and would stagger through the streets. He fell into the company of gamblers, because he could not refuse their solicitations. He thus became a gambler himself, and went on from step to step, never having resolution to say no, till he ruined himself, and planted within him the seeds

of disease, which hurried him to a premature grave. He died the miserable victim of his own irresolution.

Thousands have been thus ruined. They are amiable in disposition, and in general mean well, but have not courage to do their duty. They fear that others will laugh at them. Now, unless you are sufficiently brave not to care if others do laugh at you; unless you have sufficient courage to say no, when others tempt you to do wrong, you will be always in difficulty: such a person never can be happy or respected. You must not expect it will be always easy to do your duty. At times it will require a great mental struggle, and call into exercise all the resolution that you possess. It is best that it should be so, that you may acquire firmness of character and strength of integrity.

Near a school-house in the country, there was an apple-tree. One summer it was covered with hard, sour, and green apples, and the little girls who went to that school could hardly resist the temptation of eating those apples, though they knew that there was danger of its making them sick. One girl, who went to that school, was expressly forbidden by her mother from eating them. But when all her playmates were around her, with the apples in their hands,

urging her to eat them, and telling her that her mother never would know it, she wickedly yielded to their solicitation. She felt guilty, as, in disobedience to her mother's commands, she ate the forbidden fruit. But she tried to appease her conscience by thinking that it could do no harm.

Having thus commenced disobedience, she could every day eat more freely, and with less reluctance. At last she was taken sick. Her mother asked her if she had been eating any of the green apples at school. Here came another temptation to sin. When we once commence doing wrong, it is impossible to tell where we shall stop. She was afraid to acknowledge to her mother her disobedience; and to hide the fault she told a lie. She declared that she had not eaten any of the apples. Unhappy girl! she had first disobeyed her mother, and then told a lie to conceal her sin.

Temptations will be continually coming upon you, which you will find it hard to resist. But if you once yield, you have entered that downward path which leads continually to greater and greater sins, and finally to sorrow and shame. How much wiser would it have been in the little girl, whose story we have just related, if she had in the first instance resolutely

refused to disobey her mother's command! How much happier would she have been, when retiring to sleep at night, if she had the joy of an approving conscience, and could with a grateful heart, ask the blessing of God! The only path of safety and happiness is implicit obedience. If in the slightest particular, you yield to temptation, and do that which you know to be wrong, you will not know when or where to stop. To hide one crime, you will be guilty of another; and thus you will draw down upon yourself the frown of your Maker, and expose yourself to sorrow for time and eternity.

And think not that these temptations to do wrong will be few or feeble. Hardly a day will pass in which you will not be tempted, either through indolence to neglect your duty, or to do that which you know your parents will disapprove. A few years ago, two little boys went to pass the afternoon and evening at the house of one of their playmates, who had a party, to celebrate his birth-day. Their parents told them to come home at eight o'clock in the evening. It was a beautiful afternoon, late in the autumn, as the large party of boys assembled at the house of their friend. Numerous barns and sheds were attached to the house, and a beautiful grove of beech and of oak surrounded it,

affording a most delightful place for all kinds of sport. Never did boys have a more happy



THE PARTY.

time. They climbed the trees, and swung upon the limbs. And as they jumped upon the new-made hay in the barns, they made the walls ring with their joyous shouts. Happiness seemed, for the time, to fill every heart. They continued their sports till the sun had gone down behind the hills, and the last ray of twilight had disappeared. When it became too dark for

out-door play, they went into the house, and commenced new plays in the brightly-lighted parlor. As they were in the midst of the exciting game of "blind man's buff," some one entered the room, and requested them all to take their seats, for apples and nuts were to be brought in. Just as the door was opened by the servant bringing in the waiter loaded with apples and nuts, the clock struck eight. The boys, who had been directed to leave at that hour, felt very much troubled. They knew not what to do. The temptation to stay was almost too strong to be resisted. The older brother of the two whispered to one of the boys at his side, that he must go. Immediately there was an uproar all over the room, each one exclaiming against it.

"Why," said one, "my mother told *me* that I might stay till nine."

"My mother," said another, "did not say any thing about my coming home; she will let me stay as long as I please."

"*I* would not be tied to my mother's apron string," said a rude boy, in a distant part of the room.

A timid boy, who lived in the next house to the one in which these two boys lived, came up, and said, with a very imploring countenance

and voice, "I am going home at half-past eight. Now do stay a little while longer, and then we will go home together. I don't dare to go alone, it is so dark."

And even the lady of the house where they were visiting, came to them and said, "I do not think that your mother will have any objection to your staying a few minutes longer, to eat an apple and a few nuts. I would have sent them in earlier, if I had known that you wished to go."

Now, what could these poor boys do? How could they summon resolution to resist so much entreaty? For a moment they hesitated, and almost yielded to the temptation. But virtue wavered only for a moment. They immediately mustered all their courage, and said, "We must go." Hastily bidding their playmates all good night, they got their hats as quick as they could, for fear, if they delayed, they should yield to the temptation,—and left the house. They stopped not a moment to look back upon the brightly-shining windows, and happy group of boys within, but, taking hold of each other's hands, ran as fast as they could on their way home. When they arrived at home, their father and mother met them with a smile. And when their parents learned under what strong temp-

tations they had been to disobey, and that they had triumphed over these temptations, they looked upon their children with feelings of gratification, which amply repaid them for all their trial. And when these boys went to bed that night, they felt that they had done their duty, and that they had given their parents pleasure; and these thoughts gave them vastly more happiness than they could have enjoyed if they had remained with their playmates beyond the hour which their parents had permitted. This was a noble proof of their determination to do their duty.

And, considering their youth and inexperience, and the circumstances of the temptation, it was one of the severest trials to which such boys could be exposed. Probably, in all their after-life, they would not be under stronger temptations to swerve from duty. Now, every child will often be exposed to similar temptations. And if your resolution be not strong, you will yield. And if you once begin to yield, you will never know where to stop; but, in all probability, will go on from step to step till you are forever lost to virtue and to happiness.

But perhaps some child, who reads this, thinks I make too serious a matter of so slight a thing. You say, It can not make *much dif-*

ference whether I come home half an hour earlier or later. But you are mistaken here. It does make a great difference. For if your parents in such a case had directed you to come home at eight, remaining longer would have been disobeying them; and do you think that God can look upon the disobedience of a child as a trifling sin? Is it a trifle to refuse to obey parents who have loved you, and watched over you for months and for years; who have taken care of you in sickness, and endeavored to relieve you when in pain; who have given you clothes to wear, and food to eat, and have done all in their power to make you happy? It is inexcusable ingratitude. It is a great sin.

But perhaps you ask, What positive harm does it do? It shows your parents that their child is unwilling to obey them; and is there no harm in that? It makes your parents unhappy; and is there no harm in that? It tempts you to disobey in other things; and is there no harm in that? It is entering upon that career of sin which led the girl, whom we have, in the first chapter, described to you, to the house of correction, and the wretched boy to the gallows. Oh, beware how you think it is a little thing to disobey your parents! Their happiness is in a great degree in your hands;

and every thing which you knowingly do that disturbs their happiness in the least degree, is sin in the sight of God; and you must answer for it at his bar.

If you go into any state prison, you will see a large number of men working in silence and in gloom. They are dressed in clothes of contrasted colors, that, in case of escape, they may be easily detected. But the constant presence of vigilant keepers, and the high walls of stone, guarded by an armed sentry, render escape almost impossible. There many of these guilty men remain, month after month, and year after year, in friendlessness, and in silence, and in sorrow. They are in confinement and disgrace. At night, they are marched to their solitary cells, there to pass the weary hours, with no friend to converse with, and no joy to cheer them. They are left, in darkness and in solitude, to their own gloomy re-



THE PRISON.

flections. And, oh! how many bitter tears must be shed in the midnight darkness of those cells! How many an unhappy criminal would give worlds, if he had them to give, that he might again be innocent and free!

You will see sometimes in prisons many who are young—almost children. If you go around from cell to cell, and inquire how these wretched persons commenced their course of sin, very many will tell you that it was with disobedience to parents. You will find prisoners there, whose parents are most affectionate and kind. They have endeavored to make their children virtuous and happy. But, oh! how cruelly have their hopes been blasted! A disobedient son has gone from step to step in crime, till he has brought himself to the gloomy cell of the prison, and has broken his parents' hearts by his disobedience.

The chaplain of a state prison once made the following interesting statement. It shows the nature of progress in crime.

"A few weeks since, I addressed the congregation to which I minister, on the importance of a strict attention to what are usually denominated *little things;* and remarked, that it is the want of attention to these *little things*,

which not unfrequently throws a disastrous influence over the whole course of subsequent life. I also remarked, that a large proportion of the events and transactions, which go to make up the lives of most men, are, as they are usually estimated, comparatively unimportant and trivial; and yet, that all these events and transactions contribute, in a greater or less degree, to the formation of character; and that on *moral character* are suspended, essentially, our usefulness and happiness in time, and our well-being in eternity.

"I then remarked, that I could not doubt, but, on sober reflection, many of that assembly would find that they owed the complexion of a great portion of their lives, and their unhappy situation as tenants of the state prison, to some event or transaction comparatively trivial, and of which, at the time, they thought very little. I requested them to make the examination, and see whether the remark I had made was not correct.

"This was on the Sabbath. The next morning, one of the prisoners, an interesting young man, came to me, and observed, that he should be glad to have some conversation with me, whenever I should find it convenient. Accordingly, in the afternoon of the same day, I sent

for him. On his being seated, and my requesting him to state freely what he wished to say, he said that he wished to let me know how peculiarly appropriate to his case were the observations I had made the previous day, on the influence of little things; and if I would permit him, he would give me a brief sketch of his history; and, particularly, of the transaction which almost in childhood had given a disastrous coloring to the whole period of his youth, and, in the result, had brought him to be an occupant of his present dreadful abode.

"It appears, from the sketch which he gave, that he was about ten years of age when his father moved from a distant part of the state to a town in the vicinity of Boston. In this town was a respectable boarding-school, not a great distance from the residence of his father; and to this school he was sent. Having always lived in the country, he had seen very few of those novelties, and parades, and shows, which are so common in and near the city; and it is not wonderful that when they occurred, he should, like most children, feel a strong desire to witness them.

"Before he had been long at school, he heard that there was to be a '*Cattle Show*' at Brighton. He had never seen a Cattle Show.

He presumed it must be a very interesting spectacle, and felt a very strong desire to attend it. This desire, on the morning of the first day of the show, he expressed to his father, and was told that it would be a very improper place for him to go to, unless attended by some suitable person to watch over and take care of him; and that such was the business of the father, that he could not accompany him, and, of course, his desire could not be gratified. He was sorely disappointed, but resolved not to give up, without further effort, an object on which his heart was so much set.

"The next morning he beset his father again on the subject. His father seemed anxious to have his son gratified, but told him that he could by no means consent to have him go to such a place without suitable company; and, though his business was urgent, he would try to go in the afternoon; and, if he did, he would call at the school-house, and take him with him. This was all that he could promise.

"But here was an *uncertainty*, an *if*, which very illy accorded with the eager curiosity of the son. Accordingly, he resolved that he would go at all hazards. He doubted much whether his father would go, and if he *did not*, he concluded he might, without much difficulty,

go himself, and conceal it from his father. Having formed his determination and laid his plan, he went, before leaving home in the morning, to his father's desk, and took a little money to spend on the occasion ; and, instead of going to school, went to Brighton. Contrary, however, to his expectations and hopes, his father, for the sake of gratifying him, concluded to go to the show, and, on his way, called for his son. But no son was to be found. The teacher said that the boy had not been at school that day.

"The father went to the Cattle Show, and during the afternoon saw the son there, but took care that the son should not discover him. After the return of both at evening, the father inquired of the son whether he had attended school that day. His reply was that he had. My youthful readers will perceive how readily and naturally one fault leads to another. But the son was soon satisfied from further questions, and from the manner of his father, that he knew where he had been ; and he confessed the whole.

"The father told him that he should feel himself bound in duty to acquaint his teacher with the affair, and to request him to call him to account for absenting himself thus from the school

without permission, and to inflict such punishment on him as might be thought proper.

"He was accordingly sent to school, and, in his view, disgraced in the estimation of his teacher and of his school-fellows; and he resolved not to submit to it for any great length of time. A few days after this, he left home, under pretense of going to school, and ran away. He traveled on, until he reached the town from which his father had removed, and had been absent for several weeks before his parents ascertained what had become of him. He was, however, discovered, and brought back to his home.

"Some time after this, he was sent to another school in a neighboring town; but not being altogether pleased, he resolved, as he had run away once, that he would try the experiment again; and this he did. He had been absent six months before his parents ascertained what had become of him. He had changed his name; but getting into some difficulty, in consequence of which he must go to jail, unless he could find friends, he was constrained to tell his name, and who were his parents; and in this way his good father, whom he had so much abused, learning his son's condition, came for-

ward to his aid, and saved him from confinement in a prison.

"But I should make this story much too long, were I to detail all the particulars of his subsequent life until he became a tenant of the state prison. Suffice it to say, that he went on from one mis-step to another, until he entered upon that career of crime which terminated as before stated.

"And now, to what do you think this unhappy young man ascribes his wanderings from home, and virtue, and happiness, and the forlorn condition in which he now finds himself? Why, simply, to the *trivial circumstance* of his leaving school one day, without his father's consent, for the purpose of going to a cattle show! And what do you think he says of it now? 'I feel,' said he, 'that all I have suffered, and still suffer, is the righteous chastisement of heaven. I deserve it all, for my wicked disobedience both to my earthly and my heavenly Father; and I wish,' said he, further, 'that you would make such use of my case as you shall think best calculated to instruct and benefit the young.'

"And now," continues the chaplain, "I have drawn up this sketch—and I can assure you it is no fictitious one—for your perusal. You here see what has been the result of a single act

of disobedience to a parent; what it has already cost this unhappy man to gratify, in an unlawful way, his youthful curiosity even in a single instance.

"May He, who giveth wisdom to all who ask it, lead and guide you safely through the journey of life, and cause that even this humble sketch shall serve to strengthen you in virtue, and to deter you from the paths of the Destroyer."

Can any child read this narrative without trembling at the thought of disobedience, even in the most trifling affair? If you once disobey your parents, it is impossible to tell to what it will lead. Crime follows in the steps of crime, till the career is closed by irretrievable disgrace and eternal ruin. The consequences reach far, far beyond the grave. They affect our interests and our happiness in that eternal world to which we are all rapidly going. Yes; the child who utters one falsehood, or is guilty of one act of disobedience, may, in consequence of that one yielding to temptation, be hurried on from crime to crime, till his soul is ruined, and he is shut up, by the command of God, in those awful dungeons of endless despair prepared for the devil and his angels.

And how ungrateful is disobedience! A noble-hearted boy would deny himself almost any pleasure; he would meet almost any danger; he would endure almost any suffering, before he would, in the most trifling particular, disobey parents who had been so kind, and had endured so much to make him happy. How different is such a child from one who is so ungrateful that he will disobey his parents merely that he may play a few moments longer, or that he may avoid some trifling work that he does not wish to perform! There is a magnanimity in a child who feels so grateful for his parents' love that he will repay them by all the affection and obedience in his power, which attracts the respect and affection of all who know him.

Suppose you see a boy walking before his mother. The boy's father is dead; he has been killed in battle. You see the orphan boy carrying upon his shoulder his father's sword and cap. You look at his poor mother. She is weeping, for her husband is dead. She is returning in sorrow to her lonely house. She has no friend but her dear boy. How ardently does she love him! All her hopes of earthly happiness are depending upon his obedience and affection. She loves her boy so well, that she would be willing to die, to make him happy.

She will work night and day, while he is young, to supply him with clothes and with food. And all she asks and hopes is, that her boy will be affectionate, and obedient, and good.

And, oh! how ungrateful and cruel will he be, if he neglect that mother, and by his unkindness cause her to weep! But you see that he looks like a noble-hearted boy. His countenance seems to say, "Dear mother; if ever I grow up to be a man, you shall never want, if I can help it." Oh, who can help loving the boy who loves his mother!

There was a boy about thirteen years old, whose name was Casabianca. His father was the commander of a ship of war called the Orient. This boy accompanied his father to the seas. His ship was once engaged in a terrible battle near the river Nile. In the midst of the thunders of the battle, while the shot were flying thickly around, and strewing the decks with blood, this brave boy stood by the side of his father, faithfully discharging the duties which were assigned to him. At last his father placed him in a particular part of the ship, to perform some service there, and told him to remain at his post till he should call him away. As the father went to some distant part of the ship to notice the progress of the battle, a ball from the

enemy's vessel laid him dead upon the deck. But the son, unconscious of his father's death, and faithful to the trust reposed in him, remained in his post, waiting for his father's orders. The battle raged dreadfully around him.



CASABIANCA.

The blood of the slain flowed at his feet. The ship took fire, and the threatening flames drew nearer and nearer. Still this noble-hearted boy would not disobey his father. In the face of blood, and balls, and fire, he stood firm and

obedient. The sailors began to desert the burning and sinking ship, and the boy cried out, "Father, may I go?" But no voice of permission could come from the mangled body of his lifeless father. And the boy, not knowing that he was dead, would rather die than disobey. And there that boy stood, at his post, till every man had deserted the ship; and he stood and perished in the flames. O, what a boy was that! Every body who ever heard of him thinks that he was one of the noblest boys that ever was born. Rather than disobey his father, he would die in the flames. This account has been written in poetry; and, as the children who read this book, may like to see it, I will present it to them here:—

CASABIANCA.

The boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but him had fled;
The flame that lit the battle's wreck,
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
As born to rule the storm;
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud, though childlike form.

The flames rolled on; he would not go,
Without his father's word;

That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud—"Say, father, say.
"If yet my task is done."
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

"Speak, father," once again he cried,
If I may yet be gone."
And—but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flames rolled on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair;
And looked from that lone post of death,
In still, yet brave despair;

And shouted but once more aloud,
"My father, must I stay?"
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapped the ship in splendor wild,
They caught the flag on high,
And streamed above the gallant child,
Like banners in the sky.

Then came a burst of thunder sound—
The boy—oh! where was he?
Ask of the winds that far around
With fragments strewed the sea.

With mast, and helm, and pennon fair,
That well had borne their part,

But the noblest thing that perished there,
Was that young, faithful heart.

O, who would not love to have such a child as that! Is not such a boy more noble than one who will disobey his parents merely that he may have a little play, or that he may avoid some unpleasant duty? The brave little Casabianca would rather die than disobey. He loved his father. He had confidence in him. And even when death was staring him in the face, when

"The flames rolled on, he would not go,
Without his father's word."

I have known some bad boys who thought it looked brave to care nothing for the wishes of their parents. But do you think that Casabianca was a coward? No; the boy who is truly brave, and has a noble spirit, will obey his parents. If others urge him to act differently, he will dare to tell them that he means to do his duty; and if they laugh at him, he will let them laugh, and show them, by his conduct, that he does not care for the sneers of bad boys. The fact is, that, in almost all cases, disobedient boys are mean, and cowardly, and contemptible. They have not one particle of the spirit of the

noble Casabianca. And when these disobedient boys grow up to be men, they do not command influence or respect.

If you would be useful and happy when you arrive at mature years, you must be affectionate and obedient as a child. It is invariably true that the path of duty is the path of peace. The child who has established principles of firm integrity—who has that undaunted resolution which can face opposition and brave ridicule—bids fair to rise to eminence in usefulness and respect. These qualities, which shed so lovely a charm over childhood, will go with you into maturer life; they will give stability to your character, and command respect. And those faults of childhood which render one hesitating, and weak, and cowardly, will, in all probability, continue through your whole earthly existence. The man is but the grown-up child, possessing generally the same traits of character in every period of life. How important it is then that, in early youth, you should acquire the habit of triumphing over temptation, and of resolutely discharging all your duties!

It is important for you to remember that obedience requires of you, not only to do as you are bidden, *but to do it with cheerfulness and alacrity*. Suppose, as you are sitting at the

table in a pleasant evening, the customary hour for you to retire to rest arrives. You are, perhaps, engaged in reading some very interesting book, and do not feel at all sleepy. You ask permission to sit up a little longer. But your mother tells you that the time for you to go to bed has come, and she prefers that you should be regular in your habits. You think it is hard that you can not be indulged in your wishes, and, with sullen looks, shut your book, and, taking a light, in ill-humor go to your chamber.

Now, this is not obedience. As you retire to your chamber, the displeasure of God follows you. Your sin of disobedience is so great that you can not even pray before you fall asleep. It is impossible for a person to pray when out of humor. You may repeat the words of prayer, but you can not offer acceptable prayer to the Lord. And as you lie down upon your bed, and the darkness of night is around you, your offended Maker regards you as an ungrateful and disobedient child. And all the night long his eye is upon your heart, and the knowledge of your sin is in his mind.

Obedience belongs to the heart, as well as to the outward conduct. It is necessary that you should fulfill the wishes of your parents with a spirit of affection and cheerfulness. You should

feel that they know what is best, and, instead of being sullen and displeased because they do not think fit to indulge you in all your wishes, you should, with a pleasant countenance and a willing heart, yield to their requirements.

You do not know how much pleasure it affords your parents to see you happy. They are willing to make almost any sacrifice for your good. And they never have more heartfelt enjoyment themselves than when they see their children virtuous, contented, and happy. When they refuse to gratify any of your desires, it is not because they do not wish to see you happy, but because they see that your happiness will be best promoted by refusing your request. They have lived longer in the world than you, and know better than you the dangers by which you are surrounded. Deeply interested in your book, you desire to sit up later than usual, and think it would make you happy. But your mother, who is older and wiser, knows that the way to make children healthy and happy, is to have them in the regular habit of retiring early at night. And when you ask to sit up later than usual, she loves you too well to permit it. You think she is cruel, when, in fact, she is kind. If she were an unkind mother, and cared nothing about your happiness, she

would say, "O yes; you may sit up as long as you please. I do not care any thing about it."

Now, is it obedience, when your kind mother is doing all in her power to make you happy, for you to look sullen and morose? Is it honoring your father and your mother, for you to look offended and speak unkindly, because they wish you to do that which they know to be for your welfare? The truly grateful child will endeavor, always, with a pleasant countenance, and a peaceful heart, to yield ready obedience to his parents' wishes. He will never murmur or complain. Such a child can retire to bed at night contented and happy. He can sincerely thank God for all his goodness, and pray for that protection which God is ever ready to grant to those who love him.

There is hardly any subject in regard to which children more frequently complain, than of the unwillingness of their parents to indulge them in evening plays out of doors, and evening visits. An active boy, whose heart is full of fun and frolic, is sitting quietly by the fireside, in a pleasant winter evening. Every now and then he hears the loud shouts and joyful laugh of some twenty of his companions, who are making the moonlight air ring with their merri-

ment. Occasionally, a troop of them go rushing by the windows, in the impetuosity of their sports. The ardent little fellow by the fireside can hardly contain himself. He longs to unite his voice in the shout, and try his strength in the chase. He nestles restlessly in his chair; he walks across the room, and peeps through the curtains. As he sees the dark forms of the boys clustered together in merry groups, or scattered in their plays, he feels as though he were a prisoner. And even though he be a good boy, and obedient to his parents, he can hardly understand why it is that they deprive him of this pleasure.

I recollect well that I used to feel thus when I was a boy, and I suppose other boys feel so. But now I see the reason for these prohibitions. Those night plays led the boys into bad habits. All kinds of boys met together, and some would use indecent and profane language, which depraved the hearts and corrupted the morals of the rest. The boys who were thus spending their evenings, were misimproving their time, and acquiring a disrelish for the purifying and peaceful enjoyments of home.

You sometimes see men who appear to care nothing about their families. They spend their evenings away from home with the idle and the

dissolute. Such men are miserable and despised. Their families are forsaken and unhappy. Why do these men do so? Because, when they were boys, they spent their evenings away from home, playing in the streets. Thus home lost all its charms, virtue was banished from their bosoms, and life was robbed of its joy. I wish every boy who reads this would think of these reasons, and see if they are not sufficient. Your kind parents do not allow you to go out in the evenings and play in the streets.

1. Because you will acquire bad habits. You will grow rude and vulgar in manners, and acquire a relish for pleasures which will destroy your usefulness and your happiness.

2. You will always find in such scenes bad boys, and must hear much indecent and profane language, which will corrupt your heart.

3. You will lose all fondness for the enjoyment of home, and will be in great danger of growing up a dissipated and a worthless man.

Now, are not these reasons sufficient to induce your parents to guard you against such temptations? But perhaps you say, *Other parents* let *their* children go out and play as much as they please every evening. How grateful, then, ought you to be, that you have parents

who are so kind and faithful that they will preserve you from these occasions of sin and sorrow! They love you too well to be willing to see you preparing for an unhappy and profitless life.

It not unfrequently is the case that a girl has young associates, who are in the habit of walking without protectors in the evening twilight. On the evening of some lovely summer's day, as the whole western sky is blazing with the golden hue of sunset, her companions call at her door, to invite her to accompany them upon an excursion of pleasure. She runs to her parents with her heart bounding with joy, in anticipation of the walk. They inquire into the plans of the party, and find that it will be impossible for them to return from their contemplated expedition before the darkness of the evening shall come. As affectionate and faithful parents, they feel that it is not proper or safe for them to trust their little daughter in such a situation. They, consequently, can not consent that she should go. She is disappointed in the extreme, and as she sees her friends departing, social and happy, she retires to her chamber and weeps.

The disappointment to her is in fact a very severe one, and she can hardly help feeling that

her parents are cruel, to deprive her of so much anticipated pleasure. Her companions go away with the same feelings. They make many severe remarks, and really think that this little girl's parents are unkind. Perhaps they have a pleasant walk, and all return home in safety; and for many days they talk together at school of the delightful enjoyments of that evening. And this increases the impression on the mind of the girl who was not allowed to join them, that it was unkind in her parents not to let her go.

But, perhaps, on the other hand, as they are returning, the party meet a drunken man, who staggers in among them. Terrified, they scatter and run. One, in endeavoring to climb over a fence, spoils her gown. Another, fleeing in the dark, falls, and sadly bruises her face. Another, with loss of bonnet, and with disheveled hair, gains the door of her home. And thus is this party, commenced with high expectations of joy, terminated with fright and tears. The parents of the little girl who remained at home, knew that they were exposed to all this; and they loved their daughter too well to allow her to be placed in such a situation. Was it not kind in them?

Perhaps, as they were returning, the party

met some twenty or more of the rudest boys of the village, in the midst of their most exciting sports. Here are Emma, Maria, and Susan, with their party of timid girls, who must force their way through this crowd of turbulent and noisy boys. It is already dark. Some of the most unmannerly and wicked boys of the village are there assembled. They are highly excited with their sports. And the moment they catch a view of the party of girls, they raise a shout, and rush in among them reckless and thoughtless. The parents of the little girl who stayed at home, knew that she would be exposed to such scenes; and as they loved their daughter, they could not consent that she should go. Was it not kind?

A few young girls once went on such an evening walk, intending to return before it was dark. But in the height of their enjoyment they forgot how rapidly time was passing, and twilight was leaving them. But, at last, when they found how far they were from home, and how dark it was growing, they became quite alarmed, and hastened homeward. They, however, got along very well while they were all together. But when it became necessary for them to separate, to go to their respective

homes, and several of them had to go alone in the darkness, they felt quite terrified.

It was necessary for one of the party after she had left all her companions, to go nearly a quarter of a mile. She set out upon the run, her heart beating with fear. She had not proceeded far, however, before she heard the loud shouts of a mob of young men and boys, directly in the street through which she must pass. As she drew nearer, the shouts and laughter grew louder and more appalling. She hesitated. But what could she do? She must go on. Trembling, she endeavored to glide through the crowd, when a great brutal boy, with a horrid mask on his face and a "jack-o'-lantern" in his hand, came up before her. He threw the glare of the light upon her countenance, and stared her full in the face. "Here is my wife," said he, and tried to draw her arm into his. A loud shout from the multitude of boys echoed through the darkened air. Hardly knowing what she did, she pressed through the crowd, and, breathless with fright, arrived at her home. And I will assure you she did not wish to take any more evening walks without a protector. From that time afterward she was careful to be under her father's roof before it was dark.

Now can you think that your father or mother are unkind, because they are unwilling to have you placed in such a situation? And when they are doing all that they can to make you happy, ought you not to be grateful, and by a cheerful countenance, and ready obedience, to try to reward them for their love?

It is the duty of all children to keep in mind that their parents know what is best. And when they refuse to gratify your wishes, you should remember that their object is to do you good. That obedience which is prompt and cheerful, is the only obedience which is acceptable to them, or well-pleasing to God. A great many cases will occur in which you will wish to do that which your parents will not approve. If you do not, in such cases, pleasantly and readily yield to their wishes, you are ungrateful and disobedient.

CHAPTER IV.

GRATITUDE.

It is the duty of children to be grateful to their parents, for the long-continued kindness which their parents have shown them.

It is especially the duty of a child to be grateful to his mother. Your mother has done a great deal, and suffered a great deal for you. She has watched over you and taken care of you a great many years. You ought to repay her for this with gratitude.

It is not enough, therefore, that children should obey their parents' expressed commands. You ought to try to do every thing which you think will give them pleasure, whether they tell you to do it or not. Good children will seek for opportunities to make their parents happy. A little girl, for instance, has some work to do. She knows that if she does it well and quick, it will gratify her mother. Now, if she be a good girl, she will not wait for her mother's orders, but will, of her own accord, improve her

time, that she may exhibit the work to her mother sooner and more nicely done than she expected.

Perhaps her mother is sick. Her affectionate daughter will not wait for her mother to express her wishes. She will try to anticipate them. She will walk softly around the chamber, arranging every thing in cheerful order. She will adjust the clothes of the bed, that her mother may lie as comfortably as possible. And she will watch all her mother's movements, that she may learn what things she needs before she asks for them. Such will be the conduct of an affectionate and obedient child.

I was once called to see a poor woman who was very sick. She was a widow, and in poverty. Her only companion and only earthly reliance was her daughter. As I entered the humble dwelling of this poor woman, I saw her bolstered up in the bed, with her pale countenance emaciated with pain, and every thing about the room proclaiming the most abject poverty. Her daughter sat sewing at the head of the bed, watching every want of her mother, and active with her needle. The perfect neatness of the room told how faithful was the daughter in the discharge of her painful and arduous duties. But her own slender form and

consumptive countenance showed that by toil and watching she was almost worn out herself. This noble girl, by night and by day, with unwearied attention, endeavored to alleviate the pains of her afflicted parent. I could not look upon her but with admiration, in seeing the devotedness with which she watched every movement of her mother.

How many wealthy parents would give all they possess, to be blessed with such a child! For months this devoted girl had watched around her mother by night and by day, with a care which seemed never to be weary. You could see by the movement of her eye, and by the expression of her countenance, how full her heart was of sympathy. She did not wait for her mother to tell her what to do, but was upon the watch all the time to find out what would be a comfort to her. This is true obedience. It is that obedience which God in heaven approves and loves.

I called often upon this poor widow, and always with increasing admiration of this devoted child. One morning, as I entered the room, I saw the mother lying upon the bed on the floor, with her head in the lap of her daughter. She was breathing short and heavy in the struggles of death. The tears were rolling

down the pale cheeks of her daughter, as she pressed her hand upon the brow of her dying mother. The hour of death had just arrived, and the poor mother, in the triumphs of Christian faith, with faint and faltering accents, was imploring God's blessing upon her dear daughter. It was a most affecting farewell. The mother, while thus expressing her gratitude to God for the kindness of her beloved child, breathed her last. And angels must have looked upon that humble abode, and upon that affecting scene, with emotions of pleasure, which could hardly be exceeded by any thing else which the world could present.

O that all children would feel the gratitude which this girl felt for a mother's early love! Then would the world be divested of half its sorrows and of half its sins. This is the kind of obedience which every child should cultivate. You should not only do whatever your parents tell you to do, with cheerfulness and alacrity, but you should be obedient to their *wishes*. You should be watchful for opportunities to give them pleasure. You should, at all times, and under all circumstances, do every thing in your power to relieve them from anxiety, and to make them happy. Then can you hope for the approbation of God, and your heart will be filled with

a joy which the ungrateful child can never feel. You can reflect with pleasure upon your conduct. When your parents are in the grave, you will feel no remorse of conscience harrowing your soul for your past unkindness. And when you die yourselves you can anticipate a happy meeting with your parents, in that heavenly home, where sin and sorrow, and sickness and death, can never come.

God has, in almost every case, connected suffering with sin. And there are related many cases in which he has, in this world, most signally punished ungrateful children. I read, a short time since, an account of an old man, who had a drunken and brutal son. This son would abuse his aged father without mercy. One day, he, in a passion, knocked him flat upon the floor, and, seizing him by his gray hairs, dragged him across the room to the threshold of the door, to cast him out. The old man, with his tremulous voice, cried out to his unnatural son, "It is enough—it is enough. God is just. When I was young, I dragged my own father in the same way; and now God is giving me the punishment I deserve."

Sometimes you will see a son who will not be obedient to his mother. He will have his own way, regardless of his mother's feelings.

He has grown up to be a stout and stubborn boy, and now the ungrateful wretch will, by his misconduct, break the heart of that very mother, who, for months and years, watched over him with a care which knew no weariness. I call him a *wretch*, for I can hardly conceive of more enormous iniquity. That boy, or that young man, who does not treat his affectionate mother with kindness and respect, is worse than I can find language to describe.

Perhaps you say, your mother is at times unreasonable. Perhaps she is so. But what of that? You have been unreasonable ten thousand times, and she has borne with you and loved you. And even if your mother be at times unreasonable in her requirements, I ask with what propriety you find fault with it. Is she to bear with all your cries in infancy, and all your fretfulness in childhood, and all your ingratitude and wants till you arrive at years of discretion, and then, because she wishes you to do some little thing which does not exactly meet your views, are you to turn upon her like a viper and sting her to the heart?

The time was, when you were a little infant, and then your mother brought paleness to her own cheek, and weakness to her own frame, that she might give you support. You were

sick, and in the cold winter night she would sit lonely by the fire, denying herself rest that she might lull her babe to sleep. You would cry



WATCHFUL CARE.

with pain, and hour after hour she would walk the floor, carrying you in her arms, till her strength failed and her limbs would hardly support her, through excess of weariness. The bright sun and the cloudless sky would invite her to go out for health and enjoyment, but she would deny herself the pleasure, and stay at

home to take care of you, her helpless babe. Her friends would solicit her to indulge in the pleasures of the social evening party, but she would refuse for your sake, and, in the solitude of her chamber, she would pass weeks and months watching all your wants.

Thus have years passed away in which you have received nothing but kindness from her hands; and can you be so hard-hearted, so ungrateful, as now to give her one moment of unnecessary pain? If she have faults, can you not bear with them, when she has so long borne with you? Oh, if you knew but the hundredth part of what she has suffered and endured for your sake, you could not, *could not*, be such a wretch as to requite her with ingratitude.

A boy who has one particle of generosity glowing in his bosom, will cling to his mother with an affection which life alone can extinguish. He will never allow her to have a single want which he can prevent. And when he grows to be a man, he will give her the warmest seat by his fireside, and the choicest food upon his table. If necessary, he will deprive himself of comforts, that he may cheer her declining years. He will prove by actions which can not be misunderstood, that he feels a gratitude for a mother's love, which shall never,

never leave him. And when she goes down to the grave in death, he will bedew her grave with the honorable tears of manly feeling. The son who does not feel thus, is unworthy of a mother's love; the frown of his offended Maker must be upon him, and he must render to Him an awful account for his ungrateful conduct.

It is, if possible, stranger still, that any *daughter* can forget a mother's care. You are always at home. You see your mother's solicitude. You are familiar with her heart. If you ever treat your mother with unkindness, remember that the time may come when your own heart will be broken by the misconduct of those who will be as dear to you as your mother's children are to her. And you may ask yourself whether you would be pleased with an exhibition of ungrateful feeling from a child whom you had loved and cherished with the tenderest care. God may reward you, even in this world, according to your deeds. And if he does not, he certainly will in the world to come. A day of judgment is at hand, and the ungrateful child has as fearful an account to render as any one who will stand at that bar.

I have just spoken to you of the grateful girl who took such good care of her poor sick mother. When that good girl dies, and meets

her mother in heaven, what a happy meeting it will be! With how much joy will she reflect upon her dutifulness as a child! And as they dwell together again in the celestial mansions, sorrow and sighing will forever flee away. If you wish to be happy here or hereafter, honor your father and your mother. Let love's pure flame burn in your heart and animate your life. Be brave, and fear not to do your duty. Be magnanimous, and do more for your parents than they require or expect. Resolve that you will do every thing in your power to make them happy, and you will be blest as a child, and useful and respected in your maturer years. Oh, how lovely is that son or daughter who has a grateful heart, and who will rather die than give a mother sorrow! Such a one is not only loved by all upon earth, but by the angels above and by our Father in heaven.

It may assist you a little to estimate your obligations to your parents, to inquire what would become of you if your parents should refuse to take care of you any longer. You, at times, perhaps, feel unwilling to obey them: suppose they should say,

"Very well, my child, if you are unwilling to obey us, you may go away from home, and take care of yourself. We can not be at the trouble

and expense of taking care of you unless you feel some gratitude."

"Well," perhaps you would say, "let me have my cloak and bonnet, and I will go immediately."

"*Your cloak and bonnet!*" your mother would reply. "The cloak and bonnet are not yours, but your father's. He bought them and paid for them. Why do you call them yours?"

You might possibly reply, after thinking a moment, "They are mine because you gave them to me."

"No, my child," your mother would say, "we have only let you have them to wear. You never have paid for them. You have not even paid us for the use of them. We wish to keep them for those of our children who are grateful for our kindness. Even the clothes you now have on are not yours. We will, however, give them to you; and now suppose you should go, and see how you can get along in taking care of yourself."

You rise to leave the house without any bonnet or cloak. But your mother says, "Stop one moment. Is there not an account to be settled before you leave? We have now clothed and fed you for ten years. The trouble and expense, at the least calculation, amount to

two dollars a-week. Indeed, I do not suppose that you could have got any one else to have taken you so cheap. Your board, for ten years, at two dollars a-week, amounts to one thousand and forty dollars. Are you under no obligation to us for all this trouble and expense?"

You hang down your head and do not know what to say. What can you say? You have no money. You can not pay them.

Your mother, after waiting a moment for an answer, continues, "In many cases, when a person does not pay what is justly due, he is sent to jail. We, however, will be particularly kind to you, and wait awhile. Perhaps you can, by working for fifteen or twenty years, and by being very economical, earn enough to pay us. But let me see; the interest of the money will be over sixty dollars a year. Oh, no! it is out of the question. You probably could not earn enough to pay us in your whole life. We never shall be paid for the time, expense, and care, we have devoted to our ungrateful daughter. We hoped she would love us, and obey us, and thus repay. But it seems she prefers to be ungrateful and disobedient. Good-bye."

You open the door and go out. It is cold and windy. Shivering with the cold, and without money, you are at once a beggar, and must

perish in the streets, unless some one takes pity on you.

You go, perhaps, to the house of a friend, and ask if they will allow you to live with them.

They at once reply, "We have so many children of our own, that we can not afford to take you, unless you will pay for your board and clothing."

You go again out into the street, cold, hungry, and friendless. The darkness of the night is coming on; you have no money to purchase a supper, or a night's lodging. Unless you can get some employment, or find some one who will pity you, you must lie down upon the hard ground, and perish with hunger and with cold.



HELPLESSNESS

Perhaps some benevolent man sees you as he is going home in the evening, and takes you to the overseers of the poor, and says, "Here is a

little vagrant girl I found in the streets. We must send the poor little thing to the poor-house, or she will starve to death."

You are carried to the poor-house. There you find a very different home from your father's. You are dressed in the coarsest garments. You have the meanest food, and are compelled to be obedient, and to do the most servile work.

Now, suppose, while you are in the poor-house, some kind gentleman and lady should come and say, "We will take this little girl, and give her food and clothes for nothing. We will take her into our own parlor, and give her a chair by our own pleasant fireside. We will buy every thing for her that she needs. We will hire persons to teach her. We will do every thing in our power to make her happy, and will not ask for any thing from her in return."

What should you think of such kindness? And what should you think of yourself, if you could go to their parlor, and receive their bounty, and yet be ungrateful and disobedient? Would not a child who could thus requite such love, be deserving of universal detestation? But all this your parents are doing, and for years have been doing for you. They pay for

the fire that warms you ; for the house that shelters you ; for the clothes that cover you ; for the food that supports you ! They watch over your bed in sickness, and provide for your instruction and enjoyment when in health ! Your parents do all this without money and without price. Now, whenever you feel ill-humored, or disposed to murmur at any of their requirements, just look a moment and see how the account stands. Inquire what would be the consequence, if they should refuse to take care of you.

The child who does not feel grateful for all this kindness, must be more unfeeling than the brutes. How can you refrain from doing every thing in your power to make those happy who have loved you so long, and have conferred upon you so many favors ! If you have any thing noble or generous in your nature, it must be excited by a parent's love.

We sometimes see a child who receives all these favors from her parents as though they were her due. She appears to have no consciousness of obligation ; no heart of gratitude. Such a child is a disgrace to human nature. Even the very fowls of the air, and cattle of the fields, love their parents. They put to shame the ungrateful child.

You can form no conception of that devotedness of love which your mother cherishes for you. She is willing to suffer almost every thing to save you from pain. She will, to protect you, face death in its most terrific form. An English gentleman tells the following affecting story, to show how ardently a mother loves her child.

"I was once going, in my gig, up the hill in the village of Frankford, near Philadelphia, when a little girl about two years old, who had toddled away from a small house, was lying basking in the sun, in the middle of the road. About two hundred yards before I got to the child, the teams of three wagons, five big horses in each, the drivers of which had stopped to drink at a tavern at the brow of the hill, started off, and came nearly abreast, galloping down the road. I got my gig off the road as speedily as I could, but expected to see the poor child crushed to death. A young man, a journeyman carpenter, who was shingling a shed by the roadside, seeing the child, and seeing the danger, though a stranger to the parents, jumped from the top of the shed, ran into the road, and snatched up the child from just before the hoof of the leading horse. The horse's leg knocked him down; but he, catching the child by its clothes, drew

it out of the way of the other horses, and saved himself by rolling back with surprising agility. The mother of the child, seeing the teams coming, and the dreadful danger of the child, had come out from the house, and, rushing forward, would have thrown herself directly under the feet of the horses, if the carpenter had not interposed and pushed her back just as he seized the child. The mother grasped her child as soon as it was within her reach, and clasping it in her arms, uttered a shriek, such as I never heard before or since; and then she dropped down as if perfectly dead. By the application of the usual means, she was restored, however, in a little while, and I, being about to depart, asked the carpenter if he were a married man, and whether he were a relation of the parents of the child. He said he was neither. 'Well, then,' said I, 'you merit the gratitude of every father and mother in the world, and I will show you mine by giving you what I have,'—pulling out the nine or ten dollars which I had in my pocket. 'No, I thank you, sir,' said he, 'I have only done what it was my duty to do.'

"Bravery, disinterestedness, and maternal affection surpassing these it is impossible to imagine. The mother was going directly in among the feet of these powerful and wild

horses, and among the wheels of the wagons. She had no thought for herself; no feeling of fear for her own life; her *shriek* was the sound of inexpressible joy, joy too great for her to support herself under."

Now, can you conceive a more ungrateful wretch, than that boy would be, if he should grow up, not to love or obey his mother? She was willing to die for him. She was willing to run directly under the feet of the horses, that she might save his life. And if he has one particle of generosity in his bosom, he will do every thing in his power to make her happy.

But your mother loves you as well as did that mother love her child. She is as willing to expose herself to danger and to death. And can you ever bear the thought of causing grief to her whose love is so strong; whose kindness is so great? It appears to me that the generous-hearted boy, who thinks of these things, must resolve to be his mother's joy and blessing.

A few years ago a child was lost in one of those vast plains in the west, called prairies. A gentleman who was engaged in the search for the child, thus describes the scene. It forcibly shows the strength of a mother's love.

"In the year 1821 I was stationed on the

Mad River circuit. You know there are extensive prairies in that part of the state. In places, there are no dwellings within miles of each other; and animals of prey are often seen there. One evening, late in autumn, a few of the neighbors were assembled around me, in one of those solitary dwellings, and we had got well engaged in the worship of God, when it was announced that the child of a widow was lost in the prairie. It was cold; the wind blew; and some rain was falling. The poor woman was in agony, and our meeting was broken up. All prepared to go in search of the lost child. The company understood the business better than I did, for they had been bred in those extensive barrens; and occurrences like the present are, probably, not unfrequent among them.

"They equipped themselves with lanterns and torches, for it was quite dark; and tin horns, to give signals to different parts of the company, when they should become widely separated. For my part, I thought duty required that I should take charge of the unhappy mother. She was nearly frantic; and as time permitted her to view her widowed and childless condition, and the circumstances of the probable death of her child, her misery seemed to double upon her. She took my arm; the company divided into

parties; and, taking different directions, we commenced the search. The understanding was, that, when the child should be found, a certain sound of the horn should be made, and that all who should hear it should repeat the signal. In this way all the company would receive the information.

"The prospect of finding a lost child in those extensive prairies, would, at any time, be sufficiently discouraging. The difficulty must be greatly increased by a dark, rainy night. We traveled many miles, and to a late hour. At length we became satisfied that further search would be unavailing; and all but the mother determined to return home. It was an idea she could not, for a moment, endure. She would hear of nothing but further search. Her strength, at last, began to fail her, and I prevailed on her to return to her abode. As she turned her face from further search, and gave up her child as lost, her misery was almost too great for endurance. 'My child,' said she, 'has been devoured by a wild beast; his little limbs have been torn asunder; and his blood been drunk by the hideous monster,'—and the idea was agony. As she clung to my arm, it seemed as if her heart-strings would break.

At times I had almost to support her in my arms, to prevent her falling to the earth.

"As we proceeded on our way back, I thought I heard, at a great distance, the sound of a horn. We stopped and listened; it was repeated. It was the concerted signal. The child was found. And what were the feelings of the mother!" Language can not describe them. Such is the strength of maternal affection.

And can a child be so hard-hearted as not to love a mother? Is there any thing which can be more ungrateful than to grieve one who loves you so ardently, and who has done so much for you?

If there be any crime which in the sight of God is greater than all others, it appears to me it must be an unkind and ungrateful treatment of parents. If the spirit of a demon dwells in any human breast, it must be in that breast which is thankless for parental favors, and which can requite that love, which watched over our infancy and protected our helpless years, with ingratitude and disrespect.

CHAPTER V.

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS.

Some time ago, a clergyman was conversing with me, in my study, and he took up a book, called an Encyclopedia. Turning over the pages, he happened to come to the name of Levi Parsons. Perhaps the young reader knows that Levi Parsons was one of the most distinguished missionaries of the American Board. He went to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel there. He then went to Alexandria, in Egypt, where he died a very happy death.

Said the gentleman, as he read the name, Levi Parsons, "I used to know him very well. When he was a boy about ten years old, we went to Leicester Academy together. I can remember perfectly how he then looked, and how he used to be dressed. When we left school, for a great many years I heard nothing about him. I could not learn whether he was living or dead. At last, when I had grown up to manhood, and was settled in the ministry, in

the interior of the state of New York, one day a gentleman called upon me, as an agent of the American Board, and wished to present the cause of missions to my congregation. He introduced himself as Mr. Parsons.

"In the course of conversation, it occurred to me that he might be the same person whom I had known as a little boy in Leicester Academy."

"Did you ever go to Leicester Academy?" said I.

"Yes," he replied, "nearly fifteen years ago, I was there a short time."

"I knew you then," said the gentleman, "very well; and if you had looked now as you then did, I should have known you at once. I have often felt very desirous to know what had become of you, and have made many inquiries, but could never learn where you were."

"Why," said Mr. Parsons, "did you feel so much interest in me?"

"Because," said the gentleman, "you were then the most conscientious boy I ever knew, and I felt greatly interested to know what kind of a man such a boy would make."

"Well," said Mr. Parsons, "if I am a Christian now, I think I was then. I am not aware of any important change in my character, since

that time. And though I had not then a suspicion that I was a Christian, so far as I can judge, if I am now governed by Christian motives, I then was."

This anecdote interested me very much, because it came in confirmation of my whole experience, that *the conscientious boy* is a Christian.

I never knew a boy or a girl who was conscientious, who seemed really desirous of doing that which was right, who did not, in mature years, give evidence of piety, and become an active and useful Christian. In fact, there can scarcely be better evidence of the piety of a child, or of a man, than conscientiousness. If a boy is sincerely desirous of doing that which his conscience tells him to be duty; if this be his habitual frame of mind, exhibited at home and at school, with parents, with teachers, with playmates, we want no better evidence, nay, we want no other evidence, that he is a child of God. With this disposition he will pray for guidance; he will read the Bible with a humble and teachable spirit, and, conscious of his many failings, he will be penitent for sin, and seek the aid of the Holy Spirit to resist temptation.

Does any boy ask, How am I to serve the

Savior? I reply, Be conscientious. Do you ask, How am I to secure God's favor in this world, and happiness in the world to come? I reply, Be conscientious. Let it be your settled principle always to try to do that which you think to be right.

Sometimes young persons think they wish to be Christians, and to be prepared to die, and yet are perplexed to know just what they ought to do to become Christians.

The very first direction to be given is, in all things—conscientiously try to do that which is right.

1. In obedience to your parents. Conscience tells you always pleasantly and immediately to obey them. It not only tells you to do what they command you to do, but to do whatever you *think* they would like to have you do. Even if you obey them, but yet do it reluctantly, with unsubmissive feelings, and a frown upon your face, conscience at once tells you that you are doing wrong.

I have heard conscience compared with the bell on the railroad locomotive. You know that when the cars approach what is called a railroad crossing, they ring the bell, to give warning of the danger. So when you are doing or about to do any thing that is wrong,

conscience rings the bell. You all hear its warning. Can any of you look back upon any act of disobedience or unkindness to your parents? Did not conscience ring the bell? Did you not feel within you that you were doing wrong?

2. Conscience will tell you, in the second place, how to act in all your plays with brothers and sisters and companions. When you are pleasant and obliging, and do that which is right, you are happy, for conscience approves. If you do this with the desire of pleasing God, you are manifesting a Christian spirit. When you are disobliging, and ill-humored, and unjust, you are unhappy, for conscience condemns.

A little girl once went to bed at night, and about an hour afterward her mother heard her sobbing. She went up stairs, and inquired the cause. The child sobbed still more violently, and told her mother she could not go to sleep, she felt so unhappy. Her mother inquired what made her so unhappy. It was some time before she could summon resolution to explain the cause of her distress; the cause was that she had that day told her a lie; she had told her mother that she did not strike her sister, which she did. Her mother talked with her a little while, and afterward prayed with her,

that God would forgive her sin; the girl then fell quietly asleep.

Now, why was it that this child was so unhappy? It was because conscience was ringing the bell—thus warning her that she was in danger—that she must not go to sleep till she had confessed her sin, and asked forgiveness. And why was it that, after having confessed her sin, she could so quietly fall asleep? It was because conscience was then pacified. How kind is it in God to give us such a guide, to tell us every day what to do, and what not to do!

Obey this inward voice, and it will be every hour a faithful friend, and will guide you safely and surely, to heaven. It will tell you what is right, in all your plays and in all your studies—at home—at school—on the Sabbath. When you read the Bible, read of a Savior's dying love, of the Holy Spirit sent to help you, conscience will tell you with what spirit to receive such instructions, and how to obey them.

Show me a boy who is thus conscientious, who tries to please his parents, and make his brothers and sisters and companions good and happy, and I have hardly a doubt that that child is a Christian. This is the way for you to come to the Savior. Because conscientiously doing

your duty, implies penitence for doing wrong. This is having a new heart. For the only satisfactory evidence which can be given that you have a new heart is, that you endeavor to please your Maker.

I presume that this is one of the principal causes of the happiness of the angels in heaven. They all endeavor to do right, and thus their consciences and hearts are always at peace. Consequently they always feel happy. And in the thronged streets of the New Jerusalem, and by the still waters and green pastures of that celestial world, and where they spread their wings in the wide expanse of the highest heavens, they exult and rejoice in perfect holiness and love.

You must ere long die. You may die soon. Are you prepared? Suppose you were now to die, and to appear before God in judgment. Do you think that it would then appear that you had always conscientiously endeavored to do right? Do you think that angels would wish to have you come and live with them?

This conscientious desire to do every thing that is pleasing to God, is the evidence of a "new heart." God says to us that we must have a new heart, and promises, in answer to our prayers, to give us one. Now, the only

evidence we can have that our hearts are changed, is from the feelings that we cherish.

The boy who is self-willed, who is disobedient, who is idle, has certainly the *old heart* of unbelief. He is unrenewed. And until he has been born again, he can never enter heaven. If he should die in this state, he must perish forever.

The boy who earnestly desires to know what his duty is, and tries to do it; who prays sincerely to God every morning and every evening, that he may be delivered from temptation, and be made holy; who studies diligently in school, because he thinks it will please God; who is respectful to his instructor, kind to his playmates, obedient to his parents, because he conscientiously desires to do his duty—*that boy* has a new heart; that boy has been born again; that boy is a Christian.

I have known many children who, I had no doubt, were Christians, though they never knew the time when their hearts were changed.

If I am to judge whether a boy is a Christian, I wish to see how he conducts himself when playing a game of ball, or sliding down hill.

Does he bear an insult patiently? Does he try to make peace on the play-ground? Does

he, in the employments and the pleasures of his boyhood, endeavor in all things to do that which his conscience tells him is right? These are the evidences of piety. They are among the strongest evidences which can be afforded. No other evidences are of any avail without these.

If you wish to know whether an apple-tree is a good one, the only way is to taste of one of its apples. You judge of the tree by its fruits. Just so the Savior says it is with the heart. The only way in which you can tell whether it is changed or unchanged, renewed or unrenewed, is by its fruits.

Just so it is with *men*. The only evidence we can have that any one is a Christian, is by his conduct. If a man loves to pray, loves to read his Bible, loves the Sabbath; if he tries to induce his fellow-men to repent of sin, and turn to God; if, in all his intercourse with his fellow-men, he endeavors to be upright, and obliging, and benevolent; if, as he contemplates a world lost in sin, he manifests a deep interest in sending the gospel to every nation and tribe,—we judge him to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. We think his works show that his heart is right. And we think that, for the sake of the Savior, who has died for sinners, all his sins are forgiven.

If, on the other hand, we see a man who is prayerless; who has no prayers in his family; who does not seem to love the Bible; who manifests little or no interest in the spiritual welfare of sinners,—we judge at once that that man is not a Christian. No matter what he may profess. His conduct shows that his heart is unchanged. By their fruits shall ye know them, says Christ.

Some persons have thought that it is very difficult to understand what is meant by a "change of heart." But it seems to me that, as to all practical purposes, it is very simple and plain.

We use the word *heart*, in this connection, just as it is used in poetry and romance, the world over; just as it is used by savage tribes and by civilized nations.

"My husband has given me every thing but his heart," said a lady, mourning over the coldness and want of affection which her husband manifested. Is not her meaning very plain? She sits alone by the winter's fire, as he is absent in the gay revel, and she prays, "Turn his *heart*, O God, from his mirthful associates, and fix it upon his family and upon thee." Can any one misunderstand such language?

The Sandwich Islanders invariably allude to

the days of their idolatry, as the time of *dark hearts*, and speak with gratitude of the *new heart* which God has given them.

A short time ago, an Indian chief was addressing a band of his brother warriors around their council-fire, in the wilderness, west of the Rocky Mountains. The circumstances were these. This chief had been, for many years, one of the most relentless foes of the white man. He had left no means untried to fan into fury the fierce passions of the much injured red man, and he often raised the storm of war upon the scattered settlers on our borders. He had been induced by the United States commissioners, who were endeavoring to effect a treaty with his tribe, to visit the President at Washington. He was received by the President with great attention, was loaded with presents, and was assured that the United States government would do all in its power to live in peace with his tribe, and to promote its welfare. This unexpected kindness completely won the warrior's heart. He returned on his pathless way, along the mighty rivers, and across the lakes and mountains of the western world, to meet his tribe in their hunting-grounds.

The fierce "braves" lighted their council-fire, and gathered around it, to welcome the return

of their chieftain. He stood in the center of the ring to address them. Every form was motionless, and every eye fixed to hear his words.

Said he, "I have been to Washington. I saw our great father. I went with the heart of an Indian. I hated the white man. Our great father took me by the hand. He spoke kindly to me. He promised love to my tribe. He took away my *Indian's heart*, and gave me a *new heart*. Ever since then I have had a *white man's heart*."

How appropriate! how plain! Could he have used language more expressive? Is it not the most concise and intelligible declaration of the change from hostility to affection? Is it not the very language the Bible uses—which God declares to be so plain, that he that runneth may read, and that the wayfaring man, though uninstructed, need not err therein?

The change of heart, which the Bible enjoins, as to its practical evidences and results, is by no means of a mysterious or unintelligible nature. It is difficult to conceive of any thing more simple.

Here is a boy who neglects prayer. He does not love to pray, or to think of God. He is disobedient to his parents, often quarrels with

his playmates, and is every day doing many things which he knows to be wrong. He does not repent of this conduct. He does not ask God's forgiveness for it. Now he has manifestly the heart of an impenitent sinner; the heart of one unreconciled to God, and he must have a "new heart," or he can never be received to heaven. There is not an angel in heaven who would not be unwilling that such a person should be admitted into those happy realms.

Here is another boy who is conscientious in all he does and says. He prays every morning and every evening that God will take care of him and preserve him from sin. He loves the Savior. He is a peacemaker on the playground. He is diligent in improving his time, that he may become a useful man. He is very attentive to his parents, and does all that he can to make them happy. This boy is a Christian. He has a *new heart*. God loves him. Angels love him. When he dies, all the angels in heaven will welcome him to their joys.

Do you ask, How am I to get this new heart? You are to get it by praying to God for a heart to love him, and by cherishing these feelings of dependence and affection. And when you find that you are truly conscientious, that you do

love to serve your Maker, that you are really penitent whenever you do any thing wrong, you may "hope" that you are a Christian.

Conscience will warn you when you are going to do wrong, and she will punish you with reproaches and stings afterward, if you do not heed her warnings. Sometimes conscience slumbers a long time, and then suddenly awakens from her sleep, and torments the soul with the remembrance of past sins.

Many cases of this kind occur among men guilty of great crimes. The following true story illustrates this :—

A jeweller in England, a man of good character and considerable wealth, having occasion, in the way of his business, to travel to some distance from the place of his abode, took along with him a servant, in order to take care of his portmanteau. He had with him some of his best jewels, and a large sum of money. The servant knew that his master had these things, and determined to rob him. At length, when in a solitary place in a wood, the servant, watching his opportunity, at a moment when his master had dismounted in the road, took a pistol from his master's saddle, and shot him dead on the spot. He then rifled him of his



THE ROBBERY.

jewels and money, and, hanging a large stone to his neck, threw him into the nearest canal.

With his booty the servant made off to a distant part of the country, where he had reason to believe that neither he nor his master was known. There he began to trade in a small way at first, that his obscurity might screen him from observation, and in the course of several years seemed to rise, by the natural progress of business, into wealth and considera-

tion; so that his good fortune appeared at once the effect and reward of industry and virtue. In fact, he counterfeited the appearance of industry and virtue so well, that he grew into great credit, married into a good family, and by laying out his hidden stores discreetly, as he saw occasion, and joining to all a universal affability, he was admitted to a share in the government of the town, and rose from one post to another, till at length he was chosen chief magistrate. In this office he maintained a fair character, and continued to fill it with no small applause, both as a governor and a judge; till one day, as he sat on the bench with some of his brethren, he himself presiding, a criminal was brought before him who was accused of murdering his master. The evidence came out full; the jury brought in the verdict that the prisoner was guilty; and the whole assembly waited the sentence of the presiding judge.

In the mean while, the judge himself manifested an unusual disorder and agitation of mind, and his color often changed; at length he arose from his seat, and, coming down from the bench, placed himself just by the unfortunate man at the bar. "You see before you," said he, addressing himself to those who had sat on the bench with him, "a striking instance of

the just retaliation of Heaven, which, this day, after thirty years' concealment, presents to you a greater criminal than the man just now found guilty." He then proceeded to make an ample confession of his guilt, and of all its aggravations. "Nor can I feel," continued he, "any relief from the agonies of an awakened conscience, but by requiring that justice be forthwith done against me in the most public and solemn manner." We may easily suppose the amazement of the whole assembly, and especially of his fellow-judges. However, they proceeded, upon this confession, to pass sentence upon him; and he died with all the symptoms of a penitent mind.

Such is the power of conscience. But what is conscience? It is not easy to define this wonderful faculty. It has been called the voice of God in the soul. But though it may not be easily defined, there is not a word in the English language, which is more perfectly and impressively intelligible than *conscience.* There is something within, which gives us pleasure when we do that which we think to be right, and pain when we do that which we consider wrong. Conscience is both judge and executioner. She decides upon the right or the

wrong of actions, and accordingly applies the reward or the scourge.

God has given to each one of us this guide. And I earnestly desire that all the readers of this book may be inspired with a sense of the value of conscience, and with the determination to be very careful in obeying all its decisions.

Endeavor to obtain an enlightened conscience. Like every other faculty of the mind, or affection of the heart, conscience is susceptible of great improvement. By cultivation, it becomes very sensitive and accurate, and gives warning of the least approach of danger. It becomes the sensitive barometer of the soul, pointing with its unerring finger to approaching storms, unrevealed to the eye. It is, indeed, sometimes the case, that when the mind is not sufficiently instructed to explain why a particular act is sinful, conscience, more enlightened and discriminating, warns us of danger. We often see a very young child, almost instinctively avoiding that which is wrong, even when the child is by no means able to explain why the particular act is wrong. Often too we see, almost in infancy, evidences of conscious guilt.

Reflect too upon the happy effects of scrupulously obeying the voice of conscience. Conscience thus obeyed is the sure guide to tran-

quillity and joy. You sometimes see a person who appears to be above the temptation of doing any thing that is wrong. She is, as it were, instinctively kind, disinterested, and obliging. As she advances in years, she gains the victory over nearly all the infirmities of human nature. Each victory makes the succeeding temptation weaker, and increases the power of resistance. The soul becomes tranquil and happy, and Satan, discomfited and put to flight year after year, is discouraged with his unsuccessful efforts, and withdraws in despair.

You, my young reader, have probably at times experienced something of this yourself. When you have been for a season unusually faithful in prayer, watchful over your own heart, and conscientious in duty, how serene have been your feelings! how easy has it seemed to rise above those temptations, which at other times have appeared almost irresistible! The fear of others loses its dominion over you. Passion is subdued. Ambition, selfishness, vanity, the love of ease, the love of pleasure,—all are vanquished, and you experience the full enjoyment of the promise, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."

We do not make sufficient effort for moral improvement. We ought to be continually

aiming at higher elevation in perfection of character. As the passion-flower recoils at a touch, so should our refined and sensitive consciences recoil at the least approach of evil. It is not enough that our hearts yield to the remorseful reproaches of conscience when deeply wounded; we should cherish such delicacy and tenderness, that the faintest whisperings of this inward monitor, may be thankfully heard and heeded. Beware how you parley with temptation. Beware how you indulge in any dalliance with sin. Beware how you disregard the mildest admonitions of this faithful guide. The first step may be a short one, but it is the entrance upon a long road of wretchedness and ruin. You may deem the act a trifling one, so trifling that it can hardly be called a sin; but when you once commence in wrong-doing, you know not where to stop.

You should resolve that you will not allow yourself, on any occasion, to do that which you think to be wrong. Let the consequences be what they may, determine in the fear of God that you will do that, and that only, which you think to be right. Thus only can you have a conscience void of offense. Thus only can you come to the Savior, and be accepted of him. Thus only can you be happy in this world,

or be preparing for happiness in the world to come.

What, my reader, is the state of your conscience? Is it tender and highly cultivated? Are you carefully obeying all its teachings? Perhaps you have not sincerely repented of sin, and surrendered yourself to the Savior. If so, surely conscience can not be silent; its reproaches must be loud and long. Does not conscience at times lift up against you the loudest thunders of her indignant remonstrance? Does she not reproach you with the disregard of a Savior's love, with slighting the warnings and disobeying the commands of your heavenly Father? Can you be willing to continue in doing this great wrong, this great violence to conscience?

It is impossible to be happy even in this life, without an approving conscience. There are few persons who have entered upon life with more favorable prospects for earthly happiness than Wilberforce. Every thing which life could present to fascinate, was spread before him, and was within his reach. But the want of an approving conscience marred every joy. "Often," he says, "while in the full enjoyment of all that this world could bestow, my conscience told me that in the true sense of the

word I was not a Christian. I laughed, I sang, I was apparently gay and happy; but the thought would steal over me, 'What madness is all this, to continue easy in a state in which a sudden call out of the world would consign me to everlasting misery, and that when eternal happiness is within my grasp!' "

Commence immediately a conscientious life. Do not say that you will wait for a more convenient season. A season more convenient than the present will probably never come.

The life of most persons is made up of resolutions formed only to be broken. We resolve, and re-resolve, and yet live the same. Conscience urges us to the performance of some particular duty; to be more watchful over our tempers; to be more attentive to our parents and friends; to be more devoted to God. We resolve that we will amend, and yet continue to yield to temptation. Thus life too frequently glides away filled with broken resolutions and unavailing regrets. Each night finds the mind disquieted with the consciousness of duties neglected during the day. And when we lie down upon a dying bed, and look back upon the days and the years which are gone, it is with lamentation that our good resolutions have been so continually broken. How many have bitterly

exclaimed in the hour of death, "O how differently would I live, if I were to pass through life again!"

How unwise is it to spend life in such a manner as to bring so much distress and anguish upon the soul at its close; especialiy, as by so doing we deprive ourselves during the whole course of life, of all substantial peace and happiness.

It is not necessary to live so. There are many who are continually making progress in moral excellence, whose "path is as the shining light, growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day." As years glide on, they ascend higher and higher into the serene and cloudless regions of religious joy. Carefully attending to the voice of conscience, they gain conquests over their passions, their appetites, and the infirmities of their corrupt nature, and find even in this life that perfect peace, which God will give those whose minds are stayed on him.

These, my young reader, are the plain principles of the Bible. This is the path, which God has pointed out, to happiness and to heaven. If you will endeavor, conscientiously and perseveringly, to obey the directions which are here presented to you, you will be shielded from many dangers and many sorrows. Your days

here on earth will probably glide away in tranquillity and peace; and when the hour arrives for you to lie down upon the bed of death, you can look back upon the past with some degree of satisfaction, and onward to the future with well-founded anticipations of acceptance at God's bar; and, having sweetly fallen asleep in Jesus, you will awake in heaven.

CHAPTER VI.

RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

In this chapter I shall consider the subject of religious truth. That you may understand your duties, it is important that you should first understand your own character in the sight of God. I can, perhaps, make this plain to you by the following illustration:

A few years since a ship sailed from England to explore the Northern Ocean. As it was a voyage of no common danger to face the storms and the tempests of those icy seas, a crew of experienced seamen were obtained, and placed under the guidance of a commander of long-tried skill. As the ship sailed from an English port, in pleasant weather and with favorable breezes, all was harmony on board, and every man was obedient to the lawful commander. As weeks passed away, and the ship pressed forward on the wide waste of waters, there were occasional acts of neglect of duty among the crew. Still the commander retained his

authority. No one ventured to refuse to be in subjection to him. But as the ship advanced farther and farther into those unexplored regions, new toils and dangers came upon the men. The cold blasts of those wintry regions chilled their limbs. Mountains of ice, dashed about by the tempests, threatened destruction to the ship and the crew. On every side as far as the eye could reach, a dreary view of chilling waves and of floating ice warned them of dangers, from which no earthly power could extricate them. The ship was far away from home, and in regions which had been seldom, if ever, seen by mortal eyes. The boldest were at times appalled by the dangers, both seen and unseen, which were clustering around them.



THE VOYAGE.

Under these circumstances the spirit of revolt broke out among that ship's crew. They resolved that they would no longer be in sub-

jection to their commander. They rose together in rebellion; deprived him of his authority, and took the control of the ship into their own hands. They then placed their captain in an open boat, and throwing in to him a few articles of provision, they turned him adrift upon that wide and cheerless ocean, and he never was heard of more. Appointing one of their number commander, they turned the ship in a different direction, and regulated all its movements by their own pleasure. After this revolt, things went on in respect to the internal affairs of the ship, pretty much as before. The men had deprived their *lawful* commander of his authority, and had elevated another to occupy his place. A stranger would, perhaps, have perceived no material difference, after this change, in the conduct of the crew. The preservation of their own lives rendered it necessary that the established rules of naval discipline should be observed. By night the watches were regularly set and relieved as before. The helmsman performed his accustomed duty, and the sails were spread to the winds, or furled in the tempest, as occasion required. But still they were all guilty of mutiny. They had refused to submit to their lawful commander. Consequently, by the laws of their country,

they were all afterward, when taken, condemned to be hung. The faithful discharge of the necessary duties of each day after their revolt, did not in the least free them from guilt. The crime of which they were guilty, and for which they deserved the severest punishment, was rebellion against the authority which was rightfully over them.

Now, our situation, as sinners in this world, is very similar to that of this rebellious crew. The Bible tells us that we have said in our hearts that "we will not have God to reign over us." Instead of living in entire obedience to him, we have chosen to serve ourselves. The accusation which God has against us, is not that we occasionally transgress his laws, but that we refuse to regard him, at all times and under all circumstances, as our ruler. Sometimes children think that if they do not tell lies, and if they obey their parents, it is all that God requires of them. This, however, is by no means the case. God requires of us not only to do our duty to our parents, and to those around us, but also to love him with our most ardent affection, and to endeavor at all times to do that which will be pleasing to him. While the mutinous seamen had command of the ship, they might have been kind to one another;

they might have watched over the sick with unwearied care and attention. They might have conformed to the rules of naval discipline with the utmost fidelity, seeing that every rope was properly adjusted, and that cleanliness and order pervaded every department. But notwithstanding all this, the guilt of their rebellion and mutiny remained unchanged. They had refused obedience to their commander, and for this they were exposed to the penalty of that law which doomed them to death.

It is the same with us. We may be kind to one another; we may be free from guile; we may be faithful in the discharge of the ordinary duties of life; yet, if we are not in subjection to God, we are justly exposed to the penalty of his law. What would have been thought of one of those mutinous seamen, if, when brought before the bar of his country, he had pleaded in his defense, that, after the revolt, he had been faithful to his new commander? Would any person have regarded that as an extenuation of his sin? No! He would at once have been led to the scaffold. And the public voice would have said unanimously, that he suffered justly for his crime.

Let us imagine that one of the mutineers in

a court of justice, when on his trial, had urged the following excuses to the judge.

Judge.—You have been accused of mutiny, and are found guilty ; and now what have you to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced against you ?

Criminal.—It is true that I helped to place the captain in the boat and to send him adrift ; but then I was no worse than the others. I did only as the rest did.

Judge.—The fact that others were equally guilty, is no excuse for you. You are to be judged by your own conduct.

Criminal.—It is very unjust that I should be punished, for I was one of the most industrious and hard-working men on board the ship. No one can say that they ever saw me idle, or that I ever refused to perform any duty, however dangerous.

Judge.—You are not on trial for idleness, but for *refusing obedience to your commander.*

Criminal.—I was a very moral man. No one ever heard me use a profane word ; and in my conduct and actions, I was civil to all my shipmates.

Judge.—You are not accused of profanity, or of impoliteness. The charge for which you are arraigned, is that you rebelled against the

lawful authority. Of this you have been proved to be guilty; and for this I must now proceed to pass the penalty of the law.

Criminal.—But I was a very benevolent man. One night one of my shipmates was sick, and I watched all the night long at his hammock. And after we placed the captain in the boat, and pushed him away, I threw in a bag of biscuit, that he might have some food.

Judge.—If your benevolence had shown itself in defending your commander, and in obedience to his authority, you might now be rewarded; but you are guilty of mutiny, and must be hung.

Criminal.—There was no man on board the ship more useful than I was. And after we had turned the captain adrift, we must all have perished if it had not been for me, for no one else understood navigation. I have a good education, and did every thing I could to instruct my shipmates, and to make them skillful seamen.

Judge.—You are then the most guilty of the whole rebellious crew. You knew your duty better than the rest, and are more inexcusable in not being faithful. It appears by your own confession, that your education was good; that your influence was extensive; and that you

had been taught those duties which man owes his fellow-man. This does not extenuate, but increases your guilt. Many of your shipmates were ignorant, and were confirmed in their rebellion by your example. They had never been taught those moral and social duties which had been impressed upon your mind. That you could have been so ungrateful, so treacherous, so cruel as to engage in this revolt, justly exposes you to the severest penalty of the law. I therefore proceed to pronounce upon you the sentence which your crimes deserve. You will be led from this place to the deepest and strongest dungeon of the prison; there to be confined till you are led to the gallows, and there to be hung by the neck till you are dead; and may God have mercy upon your soul.

Now, who would not declare that such a sentence would be just? And who does not see the absurdity of the excuses which the guilty man offered?

So it is with us all in respect to our rebellion against God. The charge which God brings against us, is, that we have refused to obey him. For this we deserve that penalty which God has threatened against rebellion. If we love our parents ever so ardently, it will not

save us, unless we also love God. If we are ever so kind to those around us, it will not secure God's approbation, unless we are also obedient to him. If our conduct is so correct that no one can accuse us of what is called an immoral act, it will be of no avail, unless we are also living with faith in the promises of God, and with persevering efforts to do his will. And we shall be as foolish as was the guilty mutineer, if we expect that any such excuses will save us from the penalty of his law.

We can not, by any fidelity in the discharge of the common duties of life, atone for the neglect to love and serve our Maker. We have broken away from his authority. We follow our own inclinations, and are obedient to the directions of others, rather than to those of our Maker.

God expects the child in the morning to acknowledge his dependence upon his Maker, and to pray for assistance to do that which is right, during all the hours of the day. And he expects you, when the evening comes, to thank him for all his goodness, and solemnly to promise, all your days, to be obedient to his authority. You must not only love your parents, but you must also love your God. You must try to

have your words and your thoughts pure, and all your conduct holy. Now, when you look back upon your past lives, and when you examine your present feelings, do you not see that you have not obeyed God in all your ways? Not only have you had wicked thoughts, and at times been disobedient to your parents, but you have not made it the great object of your life to serve your Maker.

God now desires to have you obedient to him. He loves you, and wishes to see you happy. He has for this purpose sent his Son into the world to die for your sins, and to lead you to piety and peace. The Savior now asks you to repent of sin and love him, that, when you die, you may be received to heaven, and be happy forever. You perhaps remember the passage of Scripture found in Rev. iii. 2, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me." By this the Savior expresses his desire that we should receive him to our hearts.

One of the most affecting scenes described by the pen of one of the most eloquent of writers, is that of an aged father driven from his home by ungrateful and hard-hearted children. The broken-hearted man is represented as standing

by the door of his own house, in a dark and tempestuous night, with his gray locks streaming in the wind, and his head exposed to the full fury of the storm. There he stands, drenched with the rain and shivering with the cold. But the door is barred, and the shutters are closed. His daughters hear the trembling voice of their aged parent, but refuse him admission. Their flinty hearts remain unmoved. The darkness increases ; the tempest rages ; the rain falls in torrents, and the wind howls most fearfully. The voice of their father grows feebler and feebler, as the storm spends its fury upon him. But nothing can touch the sympathies of his unnatural children. They will not open the door to him. At last, grief, and the pangs of disappointed hope, break the father's heart. He looks at the black and lowering clouds above him, and, in the phrensy of his distracted mind, invites the increasing fury of the storm. And still those wretched children refuse to receive him to their fireside, but leave him to wander in the darkness and the cold.

The representation of this scene, as described by the pen of Shakspeare, has brought tears into many eyes. The tragedy of King Lear and his wretched daughters is known throughout the civilized world. What heart is not in-

dignant at such treatment? Who does not abhor the conduct of these unnatural children?

Our blessed Savior represents himself as taking a similar attitude before the hearts of his children. He has presented himself at the door of your heart, and can you refuse him admission? "Behold," says he, "I stand at the door and knock." But we, with a hardness of heart which has triumphed over greater blessings, and is consequently more inexcusable than that of the daughters of King Lear, refuse to love him, and to receive him as our friend. He entreats admission. He asks to enter and be with you and you with him, that you may be happy. And there he has stood for days, and months, and years, and you receive him not. Could we see our own conduct in the light in which we behold the conduct of others, we should be confounded with the sense of our guilt.

Is there a child who reads this book, who has not at times felt the importance of loving the Savior? When you felt these serious impressions, Christ was pleading for admission to your heart. You have, perhaps, been sick, and feared that you were about to die. And, oh, how ardently did you then wish that the Savior were your friend! Perhaps you have seen a brother or a sister die: you wept over your companion,

as her cheek daily grew more pale, and she drew nearer and nearer to death. And when she ceased to breathe, and her limbs were cold and lifeless, you wept as though your heart would break.

And when you saw her placed in the coffin and carried to the grave, how earnestly did you desire to be prepared to die yourself! Oh, how did the world seem then to you! This was the way the Savior took to reach your heart. When on earth, he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." And now he endeavors, in many ways, to induce you to turn to him. Sometimes he makes you happy, that his goodness may excite your love. When he sees that in happiness you are most prone to forget him, he sends sorrow and trouble, under which your spirits sink, and this world appears gloomy, and you are led to look forward to a happier one to come. And does it not seem very ungrateful that you should resist all this kindness and care, and continue to refuse to submit yourself to him? You think the daughters of King Lear were very cruel. Indeed they were; but not so cruel as you. Their father had been kind to them, but not so kind as your Savior has been to you. He stood long at the door and knocked, but not so long as the

Savior has stood at the door of your heart. It is in vain that we look to find an instance of ingratitude equal to that manifested by the sinner who rejects the Savior. And it is, indeed, melancholy to think, that any child can be so hard-hearted.

It is strange that any person can resist the love which God has manifested for us. He has sent angels with messages of mercy, and invitations to his home in heaven. He sent his Son to die that we might be saved from everlasting sorrow. He has provided a world of beauty and of glory, far surpassing any thing we can conceive, to which he invites us, and where he will make us happy forever. And we are informed that all the angels in heaven are so much interested in our welfare, that "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." It is indeed wonderful that the holy and happy angels above should feel so deep an interest in our concerns. But, oh, how surpassingly strange it is, that we feel so little for ourselves!

It is kind in God that he will not let the wicked enter heaven. He loves his holy children there too well, to allow the wicked to enter and trouble them, and destroy their peace. There was a little girl once, who had a party

of her companions to spend the evening with her. They were all playing very happily in the parlor, when a drunken man happened to go by. As he heard their voices, he came staggering up to the door, and tried to get in. All the girls were very much frightened, for fear the degraded wretch would get into the parlor. But the gentleman of the house told them not to be frightened. He assured them that the man should not come in, and though it was a cold winter's night, he went out and drove him away. Now, was not this gentleman kind thus to protect these children?

Suppose a wicked man, or a lost spirit, should go to the gates of heaven and attempt to enter there. Do you suppose that God would let him in? Would not God be as kind to the angels as an earthly father to his earthly children? Every angel in heaven would cry to God for protection, if they should see the wicked approaching that happy world. And God shows his love, by declaring that the wicked shall never enter there.

"Those holy gates forever bar,
Pollution, sin, and shame;
None shall obtain admittance there,
But followers of the Lamb."

It is not because God is unkind and cruel

that he shuts up the wicked in the world of woe. He does this because he loves his children, and, like a kind father, determines to protect them from oppression and sorrow. Pure joy glows in the bosoms of the blest. Love unites them all, as they swell their songs, and take their flight. In their home, the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are forever at rest.

A few years since, there was a certain family which was united and happy. The father and mother looked upon the children who surrounded their fireside, and beheld them all virtuous in their conduct, and affectionate toward one another. Their evening sports went on harmoniously, and those children were preparing, in their beloved home, for future virtue and usefulness. But, at last, one of the sons became dissipated. He went on from step to step in vice, till he became a degraded wretch. His father and mother wept over his sins, and did every thing in their power to reclaim him. All was in vain. Every day he grew worse. His brothers and sisters found all the happiness of their home destroyed by his wickedness. The family was disgraced by him, and they were all in sorrow and tears.

One evening he was brought home so intoxicated that he was apparently lifeless. His poor

broken-hearted mother saw him conveyed in this disgraceful condition to his bed. At another time, when his parents were absent, he came home, in the evening, in a state of intoxication bordering on phrensy. He raved about the house like a madman. He swore the most shocking oaths. Enraged with one of his sisters, he seized a chair, and would have struck her, perhaps, a fatal blow, if she had not escaped by flight. The parents of this child felt that such things could no longer be permitted, and told him that, if there was not an immediate reformation in his conduct, they should forbid him to enter their house. But entreaties and warnings were alike in vain. He continued his disgraceful career. His father, perceiving that amendment was hopeless, and that the son, by remaining at home, was imbittering every moment of the family, and loading them with disgrace, sent his son to sea, and told him never to return till he could come back improved in character. To protect his remaining children, it was necessary for him to send the dissolute one away.

Now, was this father cruel, in thus endeavoring to promote the peace and the happiness of his family? Was it unkind in him to resolve to make his virtuous children happy, by exclu-

ding the vicious and the degraded? No! Every one sees that this is the dictate of parental love. If he had been a cruel father—if he had had no regard for his children, he would have allowed this abandoned son to have remained, and conducted as he pleased. He would have made no effort to protect his children, and to promote their joy.

And is it not kind of our heavenly Father to resolve that those who will not obey his laws shall be forever excluded from heaven? He loves his virtuous and obedient children, and will make them perfectly happy. He never will permit the wicked to mar their joys and degrade their home. If God were an unkind being, he would let the wicked go to heaven. He would have no prison to detain them. He would leave the good unprotected and exposed to abuse from the bad. But God is love. He never thus will abandon his children. He has provided a strong prison, with dungeons deep and dark, where he will hold the wicked, so that they can not escape. The angels in heaven have nothing to fear from wicked men, or wicked angels. God will protect his children from all harm.

Our Father in heaven is now inviting all of us to repent of our sins, and to cultivate a taste for the joys of heaven. He wishes to take us

to his own happy home, and make us loved members of his own affectionate family. And every angel in heaven rejoices, when he sees the humblest child repent of sin and turn to God. But if we will not be obedient to his laws; if we will not cultivate in our hearts those feelings of fervent love which glow and burn in the angel's bosom; if we will not here on earth learn the language of prayer and praise, God assures us that we never can be admitted to mingle with his happy family above.

The angels are happy to welcome a returning wanderer. But if they should see an unsubdued spirit directing his flight toward heaven, they all would pray to God that he might not be permitted to enter, to throw discord into their songs, and sorrow into their hearts. God is love. He will keep heaven pure and happy. All who will be obedient to him, he will gladly elevate to walk the streets of the New Jerusalem, and to inhabit the mansions which he has built for them; but the wicked he will forever exclude.

Those who will not submit to his authority must be shut out forever. If we do not yield to the warnings and entreaties which now come to us from God, we must hear the sentence, "Depart from me."—"I know you not." God

uses all the means which he deems proper to reclaim us; and when he finds that we are incorrigible, then does he close upon us the doors of our prison, that we never may escape.

If God did not regard the happiness of his children, he would break these laws; he would destroy this prison; he would turn all its guilty inmates loose upon the universe, to wander to and fro at their pleasure. But, blessed be God, he is love; and the brightness and glory of heaven never can be marred by the entrance of sin. In hell's dreary abyss, the wretched outcast from heaven will find their secure and eternal abiding-place. And now do you wish to have your home with the virtuous and happy in heaven, or with the vicious and miserable in the world of woe? Now is the time to decide. God, in this world, makes use of all those means which he thinks calculated to affect your feelings and to incline you to his service. You now hear of the love of Jesus, and feel the strivings of the Holy Spirit. You are surrounded by many who love the Savior, and enjoy all the precious privileges of the Bible and the Sabbath. God speaks to you in afflictions and enjoyments, and trys ways without number to reclaim you to himself. If you can resist all this, your case is hopeless. In the world of woe

there will be no one to plead with you the wonders of a Savior's love. You will feel no strivings of the Spirit. No Christian friends will surround you with their sympathies and their prayers. The Sabbath will no longer dawn upon you, and the Bible will no longer entreat you to turn to the Lord. If you can resist all the motives to repentance which this life affords, you are proof against all the means which God sees fit to adopt. If you die impenitent, you will forever remain impenitent, and go on unrestrained in passion and woe.

The word of God has declared that, at the day of judgment our doom will be fixed forever. The wicked shall then go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous to life eternal. The bars of the sinner's prison will never be broken. The glories of the saints' abode will never be sullied.

A few years since, a child was lost in the woods. He was out with his brothers and sisters gathering berries, and accidentally was separated from them and lost. The children, after looking in vain for some time in search of the little wanderer, returned just in the dusk of the evening, to inform their parents that their brother was lost, and could not be found. The woods at that time were infested with bears.

The darkness of a cloudy night was rapidly coming on, and the alarmed father, gathering a few of his neighbors, hastened in search of the lost child.

The mother remained at home, almost distracted with anxiety and terror. As the clouds gathered and the darkness increased, the father and the neighbors, with highly-excited fears, traversed the woods in all directions, and raised loud shouts to attract the attention of the child. But their search was in vain. They could find no traces of the wanderer; and as they stood under the boughs of the lofty trees, and listened, that if possible they might hear his feeble voice, no sound was borne to their ears but the melancholy moaning of the wind as it swept through the thick branches of the forest.



THE LOST CHILD.

The gathering clouds threatened an approaching storm, and the deep darkness of the night

had already enveloped them. It is difficult to conceive what were the feelings of that father. And who could imagine how deep the agony which filled the bosom of that mother as she heard the wind, and beheld the darkness in which her child was wandering!

The search continued in vain till nine o'clock in the evening. Then one of the party was sent back to the village to collect the inhabitants for a more extensive search. The bell rung the alarm, and the cry of fire resounded through the streets. It was, however, ascertained that it was not fire which caused the alarm, but that the bell tolled the more solemn tidings of a lost child. Every heart sympathized in the sorrows of the distracted parents. Soon great multitudes of people were seen ascending the hill upon the declivity of which the village was situated, to aid in the search. Ere long the rain began to fall, but no tidings came back to the village of the lost child. Hardly an eye was that night closed in sleep, and there was not a mother who did not feel for the agonized parents. The night passed away, and the morning dawned, and yet no tidings came. At last those engaged in the search met together and held a consultation. They made arrangements for a more minute

and extended search, and agreed that in case the child was found, a gun should be fired to give a signal to the rest of the party. As the sun arose, the clouds were dispelled, and the whole landscape glittered in the rays of the bright morning. But that village was deserted and still. The stores were closed, and business was hushed. Mothers were walking the streets with sympathizing countenances and anxious hearts. There was but one thought there—What has become of the lost child? All the affections and interest of the community were flowing in one deep and broad channel toward the little wanderer.

In the meantime the people continued their search in the forest. They explored every thicket; they examined every chasm among the rocks; they shouted, they listened, but all was in vain. Thus the night was passed.

About nine in the morning the signal-gun was fired, which announced that the child was found; and for a moment how dreadful was the suspense! Was it found a mangled corpse, or was it alive and well? Soon a joyful shout proclaimed the safety of the child. The shout was borne from tongue to tongue, till the whole forest rung again with the joyous acclamations of the multitude. A commissioned messenger



CHILD FOUND.

rapidly bore the tidings to the distracted mother. A procession was immediately formed by those engaged in the search. The child was placed upon a platform, hastily constructed from the boughs of trees, and borne in triumph at the head of the procession. When they arrived at the brow of the hill, they rested for a moment, and proclaimed their success with three loud and animated cheers. The procession then moved on, till they arrived in front of the dwelling where the parents of the child resided. The mother, who stood at the door, with streaming eyes and throbbing heart, could no longer restrain herself or her feelings. She rushed into the street, clasped her child to her bosom, and wept aloud. Every eye was suffused with tears, and for a moment all were silent. But suddenly some one gave a signal for a shout. One loud, and long, and happy note of joy rose

from the assembled multitude, and they then dispersed to their business and their homes.

This is a true story, and there was more joy over the one child that was found than over the ninety and nine that went not astray. Likewise there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. But still this is a feeble representation of the love of our Father in heaven for us, and of the joy with which the angels welcome the returning wanderer. The mother can not feel for her child that is lost as God feels for the unhappy wanderers in the paths of sin. The child was exposed to a few hours of suffering; the sinner to eternal despair. The child was in danger of being torn by the claws and the teeth of the bear—a pang which would have endured but for a moment; but the sinner must feel the ravages of the never-dying worm, must be exposed to the fury of the inextinguishable flame. Oh, if a mother can feel so much, what must be the feelings of our Father in heaven! If man can feel so deep a sympathy, what must be the emotions which glow in the bosoms of angels!

Many parables are introduced in the Bible to illustrate this feeling on the part of God. He compares himself with the kind shepherd, who, finding that one little lamb had strayed from

the flock, left the ninety and nine and went in search of the lost one. He illustrates this feeling by that of the woman who had lost a piece of silver, and immediately lighted a candle and swept the house diligently, till she found it. In like manner, we are informed, that it is not the will of our Father who is in heaven, that one of his little ones should perish. He has manifested the most astonishing love and kindness that he might make us happy.

But what greater proof of love can we have than that which God has shown to us in the gift of his Son! That you might be saved from sin and ceaseless woe, Jesus came and died. He came to the world, and placed himself in poverty, and was overwhelmed with sorrow, that he might induce you to accept salvation, and to be happy forever in heaven. The Savior was born in a stable. When an infant, his life was sought. His parents were compelled to flee out of the country, that they might save him from a violent death. As he grew up, he was friendless and forsaken. He went about from town to town, and from village to village, doing good to all. He visited the sick, and healed them. He went to the poor and the afflicted, and comforted them. He took little children in his arms, and blessed them. He

injured no one, and endeavored to do good to all. And yet he was persecuted, and insulted, and abused. Again and again he was compelled to flee for his life. They took up stones to stone him. They hired false witnesses to accuse him. At last his enemies determined to kill him.

They took him by night, as he was in a garden praying. A cruel multitude came and seized him by force, and carried him into a large hall. They then surrounded him, and heaped upon him all manner of insult and abuse. They mocked him. They collected some thorns, and made a crown, which they forced upon his head, pressing the sharp thorns into his flesh, till the blood flowed down upon his hair and his cheeks. And after thus passing the whole night, he was led out to the hill of Calvary, tottering beneath the heavy burden of the cross, which he was compelled to bear upon his own shoulders, and to which he was to be nailed. When they arrived at the place of crucifixion, they drove the nails through his hands and his feet. The cross was then fixed in the ground, and the Savior, thus cruelly suspended, was exposed to the loud and contemptuous shouts of an insulting mob. The morning air was filled with their loud execrations.

A soldier came and thrust a spear deep into his side. To quench his burning thirst, they gave him vinegar, mixed with gall.

Thus did our Savior die. He endured all his sufferings, from the cradle to the grave, that he might save sinners. And when, while enduring the agony of the cross, he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" he was then suffering those sorrows which you must otherwise have suffered. If it had not been for our Savior's sorrows and death, there would have been no help for any sinner. You never could have entered heaven. You must forever have endured the penalty of that law which saith, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Was there ever such love as this? And, oh, must not that child's heart be hard, who will not love such a Savior, and who will not do all in his power to prove his gratitude by a holy and an obedient life? Christ so loves you, that he was willing to die the most cruel of deaths, that he might make you happy. He is now in heaven, preparing mansions of glory for all those who will accept him as their Savior, and obey his law. And where is the child who does not wish to have this Savior for his friend, and to have a home in heaven?

The Holy Spirit is promised to aid you in all

your efforts to resist sin. If, when the power of temptation is strong, you will look to him for aid, he will give you strength to resist. Thus is duty made easy. God loves you. Angels desire that you should come to heaven. Jesus has died to save you. The Holy Spirit is ready to aid you in every Christian effort, and to lead you on, victorious over sin. How unreasonable, then, and how ungrateful it is for any child, to refuse to love God, and to prepare to enter the angels' home! There you can be happy. No night is there. No sickness or sorrow can ever reach you there. Glory will fill your eye. Joy will fill your heart. You will be an angel yourself, and shine in all the purity and in all the bliss of the angels' happy home.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SAVIOR.

In the last chapter I endeavored to show in what our sin against God principally consists; and also the interest which God feels in our happiness, and the sacrifice which he has made to lead us to penitence and to heaven. I shall consider in this chapter more particularly how God has opened the way of salvation for us through the Savior.

Probably no child reads this book who is not conscious of sin. You feel not only that you do not love God as you ought, but that sometimes you are ungrateful or disobedient to your parents; sometimes you get irritated against your brother or your sister, or you indulge in other feelings, which you know to be wrong. Now, the first thing which God requires of you is, that you should be penitent for all your sins. At the close of the day, you go to your chamber for sleep. Perhaps your mother goes with you, and hears you repeat a prayer of gratitude

to God for his kindness. But after she has left the chamber, and you are alone in the darkness, you recall to mind the events of the day, asking yourself what you have done that is wrong. Perhaps you were idle at school, or unkind to a playmate, or disobedient to your parents. Now, if you go to sleep without sincere repentance, and a firm resolution to try for the future to avoid such sin, the frown of God will be upon you during all the hours of the night. You ought, every evening before you go to sleep, to think of your conduct during the day, and to express to God your sincere sorrow for every thing which you have done which is displeasing to him, and humbly implore the pardon of your sins through Jesus Christ. A child who does this God loves. Such a one he will readily forgive.

But remember that it is not enough simply to *say* that you are penitent. You must really *feel* penitent. And you must resolve to be more watchful in future, and to guard against the sin over which you mourn.

You have, for instance, spoken unkindly, during the day, to your brother. At night, you feel that you have done wrong, and that God is displeased. Now, if you are sincerely penitent, and ask God's forgiveness, you will pray

that you may not again be guilty of the same fault. And when you awake in the morning, you will be watchful over yourself, that you may be kind and obliging. You will perhaps go to your brother, and say, "I did wrong in speaking unkindly to you yesterday, and I am sorry for it. I will endeavor never again to do so." At any rate, if you are really penitent, you will pray to God for forgiveness, and most sincerely resolve never willingly to be guilty of the same sin again.

But you must also remember that, by the law of God, sin can never pass unpunished. God has said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." And when you do any thing that is wrong, and afterward repent of it, God forgives you, because the Savior has borne the suffering which you deserve. This is what is meant by that passage of Scripture, "He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." Our Father in heaven loved us so much that he gave his own Son to die in our stead. And now he says that he is ready to forgive, if we will repent, and believe in his Son who has suffered and died to save us. And ought we not to love so kind a Savior?

You can not expect at present precisely and fully to understand every thing connected with

the sufferings and death of Christ, and the moral effect which they produce. In fact, it is intimated in the Bible, that even the angels in heaven find this subject one capable of tasking all their powers. You can understand, however, that Christ suffered and died in order that you might be forgiven. It would not be safe in any government to forgive sin merely on the penitence of the sinner. Civil government can not do this safely; a family government can not do it safely. It is often the case, when a man is condemned to death for a crime that he has committed, that his dearest friends, sometimes his wife and children, make the most affecting appeals to the chief magistrate of the state, to grant him pardon. But it will not do. The governor, if he knows his duty, will be firm, however painful it may be, in allowing the law to take its course: for he has to consider not merely the wishes of the unhappy criminal and his friends, but the safety and happiness of the whole community.

And so the governor of the universe must consider, not merely his own benevolent feelings toward the sinner, but the safety and the holiness of all his creatures: and he could not have forgiven our sins, unless he had planned a way by which we might *safely* be forgiven.

This way he did devise, to sustain law and protect holiness, and yet to let us go free from the punishment due to our sins. Jesus died for us. He bore our sins. By his stripes we are healed. And shall we not be grateful?

It is thus that God has provided a way for our escape from the penalty of his law. You have read, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Was it not kind in God to give his Son to suffer, that we might be saved from punishment? God has plainly given his law. And he has said, the soul that sinneth, it shall die. And he has said, that his word is so sacred, that, though heaven and earth should pass away, his word shall not pass away. We have all broken God's law, and deserve the punishment which it threatens. But our indulgent Father in heaven is looking upon us in loving-kindness and in tender mercy. He pities us, and he has given his own Son to bear the punishment which we deserve. Oh, was there ever proof of greater love?

And how ardently should we love that Savior, who is nearer and dearer than a brother, who has left heaven and all its joys, and come to the world, and suffered and died, that we

might be happy! God expects that we shall love him; that we shall receive him as our Savior, and whenever we do wrong, that we shall ask forgiveness for his sake. And when a child thinks of the sorrows which his sins have caused the Savior, it appears to me that he must love that Savior with the most ardent affection.

It was the law of a certain town that the boys should not slide down hill in the streets.* If any were found doing so, they were to be fined, and if the money was not paid, they were to be sent to jail. Now a certain boy, the son of a poor man, broke the law, and was taken up by an officer. They carried him into court, the fact was fully proved against him,



COASTING.

* To those children who live where it seldom or never snows, I ought to say in this note, that, in New England, it is a very common amusement to slide down the hills on sleds or boards, in the winter evenings, when the roads are icy and smooth. In some places this is dangerous to passengers, and then it is forbidden by law.

and he was sentenced to pay the fine. He had no money, and his father, who stood by, was poor, and found it hard work to supply the wants of the family. The money must be paid, however, or the poor boy must go to jail. The father thought that he could earn it in the evenings, and he promised, accordingly, to pay the money if they would let his son go free.

Evening after evening, then, he went out to his work, while the boy was allowed to remain by the comfortable fire, at home. After a while the money was earned and paid, and then the boy felt relieved and safe again.

Now, suppose that this boy, instead of being grateful to the father, who had thus suffered and toiled for him, should treat him with coldness and unkindness. Suppose that he should continually do things to give him pain, and always be reluctant to do the slightest thing to oblige him. Who would not despise so ungrateful a boy?

And do you think that that child who will grieve the Savior with continued sin, who will not love him, who will not try to obey him, can have one spark of noble, of generous feeling in his bosom? Would any person, of real magnanimity, disregard a friend who had done so much as the Savior has done for us? God re-

quires of us, that while we feel penitent for our sins, we should feel grateful to that Savior who has redeemed us by his blood. And when Jesus Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest," this is what he means. We must love Christ. We must regard him as the friend who has, by his own sufferings, saved us from the penalty of God's law. And it is dishonorable and base for us to refuse to love him, or for us to do any thing which will displease him.

This kind Savior is now looking upon you with affection. He has gone to heaven to prepare a place for you, and there he wishes to receive you, and to make you happy forever. His eye is upon your heart every day, and every hour. He never forgets you. Wherever you go, he follows you. He shields you from harm. He supplies all your wants. He surrounds you with blessings. And now, all that he asks for all these favors is your love; not that you may do good to him, but that he may do still more good to you. He wishes to take you, holy and happy, to the green pastures and the still waters of heaven.

Can any child refuse to love this Savior? Oh, go to him at once, and pray that he will receive you, and write your name among the

number of his friends. Then will he soon receive you to his own blissful abode.

Fair distant land! could mortal eyes
But half its charms explore,
How would our spirits long to rise,
And dwell on earth no more!

No cloud those distant regions know,
Realms ever bright and fair!
For sin, the source of mortal woe,
Can never enter there."

It is not only thus a source of safety for us in another world, to be the friend of the Savior, but it is an unspeakable means of comfort and enjoyment in this. It will be a great happiness to you in all the early years of life to be devoted to your Savior while you are young.

Besides nothing can be more irrational and dangerous than the disposition, which so many young persons have, to neglect attention to religion, thinking that there will be time enough, *when they are older*, to secure God's favor. But how unwise is this, when you know not that you will live another week! There is no one who will read this page who can not repeat the names of many children younger than themselves, who have died. How many diseases are there continually seizing the young, and

hurrying them to the grave! Whatever may be the age of any one who reads these pages, while you are reading them, there are many hundreds of persons of your age lying on a dying bed. Are you a girl of eleven years of age? Go with me to this chamber, where a little girl is dying. It is not an imaginary scene: it is reality.

The curtains are drawn, that the dazzling light of the sun may not pain the little patient's fading eye. She will never see the sun, nor the green fields, nor the white snow-clad earth again. It is with difficulty that she breathes; and her father has taken her from her bed, and holds her wasted form, wrapped in a blanket, in his lap by the fire. Her little brother and sister are whispering, and walking softly about the room, frightened to see her look so pale and thin. Her mother is dropping some medicine from a phial, and tries to conceal her face; for she is weeping. The physician is there, and says,

"Julia, my dear,"—for that is the name of the little girl,—"I ought to tell you the truth; but I am sorry to say, that I think it impossible that you should get well again. I fear that you can live but a day or two longer."

Julia is a Christian, a happy Christian and

she looks up in her father's face, and smiling faintly, says,

"Pray for me; pray that the Savior may come now. I want to kiss you all, for I am going to die."

Her pastor is also in the room, and inquires,

"Are you willing to die, Julia?"

"O yes!" she replies, with a mild and cheerful voice.

All in the room are so affected that with difficulty they restrain their tears.

"Do not cry," says Julia; "why will you? I feel so happy that I can not cry."

And now hear her soft, sweet voice, mingling with her father's as she sings,

"Fare you well! I must be gone;
I have no home nor stay with you;
I take my staff, and travel on,
Till I a better world can view,
I'll march to Canaan's land;
I'll land on Canaan's shore,
Where pleasures never end,
And troubles come no more.
Fare you well, fare you well, fare you well,
My loving friends, farewell."

And then see Julia die, as peacefully and as happily as though she were going to sleep. She has loved the Savior while a child; she

has prepared for death by penitence and prayer; and when the hour for her to die comes, even in her childhood, she looks forward with delight to a home in heaven.

Now this is not an imaginary scene. It is one which I myself witnessed but a few years since. Such scenes are now frequently occurring. And will you, my young reader, think, that because you are young, it is not necessary for you to attend to religion?

More young persons die than aged persons; more boys and girls than men and women; and consequently nothing can be more important than that you should immediately make your peace with God. Then you will be prepared to die at any time, as happily as Julia died. And if sudden disease throws you into delirium, and you die without knowing that you are dangerously sick, as is most frequently the case with children, you will *wake up* in heaven, finding angels smiling around you, calling you their dear and new-born sister; and all the joy and the beauty of that blessed world will be yours forever. When one thinks of that happy world, of the love of God, of the smiles of the Savior, of the welcome of the angels, of all the happiness with which God has filled it,—happiness to which there can be no

end, one can not help congratulating a child who goes, like Julia, early to her home.

But if, on the other hand, you neglect religion, and are suddenly taken sick, and suddenly die, what will become of you? The thought is too painful, too awful to dwell upon. Exclusion from heaven; banishment from the presence of God, with none to love you; surrounded by all the wicked of this world, and by fallen spirits,—the Bible assures you that you will pass ages which know no end in weeping and wailing, in lamentation and despair. Is it not, then, of the utmost importance, that you should immediately seek to make the Savior your friend? Can any thing be more worthy of your earnest, and persevering, and immediate prayers?

There is another reason why you should without any delay consecrate your heart and life to God. It is because you can not be really happy in this world till you do this. There is nothing which promotes our earthly happiness so much as sincere piety. The principal cause of our unhappiness in this world is to be found in our own characters, in our unrestrained passions, in our ungoverned tempers, in those feelings of ambition, vanity, and pride, which we have long cherished, and consequently find it

very difficult to subdue. Now Jesus, if we make him our friend, will help us gain the victory over these sins; and the sooner we commence this work, the less we have to struggle against, and the easier it is. And when, by the grace of God, all these wrong feelings are subdued, we have a tranquil state of heart, which is the purest enjoyment we can experience in this life.

An observing person can generally discover a sincerely pious child by the peaceful and joyful countenance she has. She is so much in the habit of loving God, and all her acquaintances, of being kind, and of making others happy, that the features of her countenance become molded into the expression of the most benignant and amiable feelings.

A very distinguished man once wrote to his young daughter that it was in her power to make herself beautiful. He said that, by cultivating a kind, and pleasant, and cheerful spirit, at all times, by doing all in her power to promote the happiness of those around her, her features would unavoidably assume that aspect of cheerfulness and of inward enjoyment, that expression of an amiable and affectionate disposition, which constitutes by far the most desirable kind of beauty; and it is indeed so.

There is no countenance so pleasant to look upon, so desirable to possess, as that which is animated by the expression of a warm and generous heart. This excites interest in every beholder, is the best letter of introduction to strangers one can possess, and almost infallibly secures the kindness of all one meets.

But this is a digression. I was speaking of the importance of being early prepared to die. Consider how much is put at hazard by delay. Have you ever thought what is meant by *immortality?* You have often heard that you are immortal; that, after the body dies, the soul will live forever. Go in imagination beyond the moon, and sun, and the distant stars, which twinkle in the deep, blue heavens; enter that heavenly world of indescribable glory, where angels dwell, where the golden city shines, and the still waters flow through the green pastures of God's peculiar abode; there the Christian soul will live and rejoice forever. Can your mind grasp the thought? Time without any end! Ages upon ages will glide away, and you will never be sick, never be sorrowful, never die. If you will really reflect upon this idea, make your mind familiar with it, you can hardly refrain from making it your constant endeavor and prayer, that you may be prepared

to enter that celestial world. As life is short at the longest—as it is always uncertain—nothing can be more important than immediate preparation for death, that we may thus at any moment safely enter upon our immortal state.

And then, again, it is much more easy to become a Christian, while you are young, than when you have grown older. You have fewer gay and thoughtless associates to tempt you to continue in sin; then your habits are not fixed, and they are more easily changed; your feelings are more tender, and more susceptible of gratitude for all a Savior's kindness and love. How often do you now, as you hear of heaven and its rapturous, never-ending joys, feel the glow of intense desire to be welcomed to that celestial world! And when you hear how the Savior has loved you, and that he has died to redeem you, at times you can hardly refrain from weeping as you think of his goodness. If you harden your heart now, and live without prayer and without loving and obeying God, soon all these feelings will disappear; you will become thoughtless and cold-hearted, and probably ere long you will lie down to die, exclaiming, with the bitterest lamentations, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

Yes, young reader! If you ever intend to become a Christian, *now* is the time; it is in the day of your youth that you are most earnestly called upon to give your affections to your Creator. The Savior, who, when on earth, said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," is now ready to receive you to his arms, and fold you to his bosom; all the angels in heaven will welcome you to their love; and when they see that you have chosen God as your father and your friend, and that you have resolved to do every thing in your power to please him, they will all look down upon you, and love you, as their young earthly brother or sister, and they will fly to meet you with smiling faces, and welcoming songs, and affectionate hearts, whenever God takes you home; and your Heavenly Father, who is now saying to you, "My son or my daughter, give me thy heart," will then joyfully say, "My child was dead, but is alive again, was lost, but now is found."

But suppose you go on in life, as many children do, thinking but little of God and of the Savior; as you grow older, you become more hardened in sin: yielding to the temptations of gayety, giddiness, and thoughtlessness, you soon have but little desire to please God, and

but little fear of displeasing him; your inward sins of vanity, ambition, irritability, and selfishness, unsubdued, and indeed hardly checked, grow daily stronger and more unyielding; the Savior mourns over you as an ungrateful child whom he can not love, and whom he never can receive to the happy mansions he has gone to prepare for those that obey him.

The thought will often occur to your mind, and will overwhelm you with anxiety and unhappiness, that you are living in sin, and that you must be forever excluded from heaven. Days of sickness will come, and in your chamber of loneliness, and silence, and pain, you will reflect upon the past with sorrow, and look forward to the future with dread; hours of depression will come, when your earthly prospects will seem clouded, every thing of a transient nature unsatisfying and worthless, and yet you will have no solid consolations of religion to cheer your spirit in its despondency; and finally there will come the hour of death.

Think how it will be with you in that hour. You lie in your chamber at midnight, in the full possession of all your powers, and feel that you are dying. Weeping friends stand silent at your bedside, watching each breath, expecting every moment you will breathe your last;

your mind retraces the months and the years of your past life, and dwells upon all its sinfulness. "O, how uselessly have I lived!" you exclaim in anguish of spirit; "how neglectful of God and of my own soul! and now I am dying, and the sentence of condemnation is already pronounced—'Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.' O that I had heeded the warnings of conscience and of God's word; but I have grieved away the Spirit, and now I am going through the dark valley, of the shadow of death, alone and comfortless. O that I had never been born."

The window-curtain at your bedside is drawn, and with languid eye you look out into the deep and cloudless heavens. The moon is there bright and undimmed, as she moves along in her magnificent pathway; and far, far beyond, in the depths of immensity, the glimmering stars send their feeble rays into your dying chamber. "Before another hour is gone," you say to yourself, "my soul will have passed beyond, far beyond those distant worlds, to hear its doom at the throne of God, to receive its condemnation for a misspent life. How rapturous would be this moment, if I were only dying the death of the righteous! Angels would then accompany me in my blissful flight beyond the

pathway of those rolling worlds, and long before the morning sun shines upon my friends here on earth, I should be rejoicing with angels and archangels in the never-ending morning of a glorious eternity. But now how dreadful a doom awaits me! How justly am I condemned!" A few more moments pass away in anguish of spirit, and the struggle is over; your lifeless body remains on earth, to return to the dust from whence it was made, and your spirit returns to receive its final doom from God, who gave it.

Now, do not think that all this is merely a fancy sketch. The time is very near when you will die; the years which seem now so long to you, are swiftly passing, and will soon be forever gone. And when you die, of what value will all things else be, compared with piety? This is the "one thing needful," which we are first to seek, and to attain which we must be willing to sacrifice every thing else.

God is our Father; we are indebted to him for every blessing we receive. It is our consequent duty to love him, with the whole heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, and to do all that we can to please him. Instead of this, we have all neglected God, and been very ungrateful for his kindness. God has declared that sin

shall not pass unpunished; we must, therefore, be punished by banishment from heaven for our sins, unless God can devise some way by which he can save us, and yet keep his word: such a way God has devised. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came "to seek and to save the lost:" 'he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities," and has borne our sins in his body on the tree;" "he hath redeemed us to God by his blood," and now the way is made plain for our salvation. If we repent of sin, trust in this Savior, and make it our great endeavor, hereafter, to abstain from sin, and to please God in all we say, and think, and do, God will forgive us for Christ's sake. This is the gospel plan of salvation; this is the meaning of the passage—"Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Do you ask what is meant by forgiving us for Jesus Christ's sake? Perhaps, in addition to what has already been said, I can explain the subject still further by the following illustration:

A lady once sent her daughter Sarah to a boarding-school at some distance from home, where she would be almost entirely among

strangers. In the town to which Sarah was going, there was a lady residing, who had for many years been an ardent friend of her mother: they had loved each other from childhood. Sarah's mother wrote the following letter to this lady, and gave it to Sarah to hand her when she should arrive at that town :—



THE LETTER.

"My Dear Friend,

"This letter will introduce to you my little daughter Sarah. She is to pass a few months

attending school in your neighborhood. I feel much solicitude respecting her, for she is quite young to go so far from home. I know that you will, my dear friend, *for my sake*, feel interested in the welfare of my darling daughter. Any kindness you can show her, I shall consider an additional evidence of your love for me."

As soon as the lady read this letter, she took Sarah in her arms, and kissed her, saying, "My dear child, I love your mother so much, that *for her sake* I must love you;" and during all the time that Sarah remained in the place, she treated her with the utmost kindness and attention. There were many other children in that school, as far from home as Sarah was, and many, perhaps, in mind and manners more interesting than Sarah was; but Sarah's mother was the very dear friend of this lady, and *for her mother's sake* she did all she could to promote her happiness. Sarah must therefore have *felt*, that it was not in consequence of any *merits* of *her own*, that she was treated with such favor, but in consequence of her *mother's* merits.

Now, this is the way in which God's favor is secured for the repenting sinner. We have all

sinned against God, and incurred his displeasure. We have no merits of our own. Christ, the beloved Son of God, has come to this world, and, by many years of sorrow and of suffering, and finally by dying on the cross, has made atonement for our sins. God was so unwilling to see us, unworthy as we are, perish in our sins, that he provided for us this Savior. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And now, if we repent of all our sins, and pray that God will, for Christ's sake, forgive us, we are assured that our sins shall all be forgiven. We are forgiven for Christ's sake. God receives us to heaven not in consequence of our own merits, but in consequence of the merits of Christ. It is thus, as the Bible expresses it, that God "magnifies his law, and makes it honorable," and yet saves those who have broken it.

This is the plan which God, in infinite wisdom and love, has adopted for the salvation of a lost world. He saw this plan to be the best that could be adopted, and the fact is mentioned in the Bible as one of the most extraordinary that has ever occurred in the whole government of God, that he should have manifested so

much affection for rebels against him, as to have secured their salvation at such a sacrifice.

It is this story of redeeming love, which is the great power of God unto salvation. This it is that Paul meant, when he said, "I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." It is this story of God's love in giving his Son to suffer, and to die for us, which, more than all things else, softens the stubborn heart, and brings us back in contrition and gratitude to God. The poor Greenlander, wrapped in furs, and shivering with cold in his ice hut, as he has heard this affecting story from the lips of missionaries has felt all the fountains of contrition and gratitude moving within him, and with an overflowing heart has cried out, "O God be merciful to me a sinner."



THE GREENLANDER.

This it is which has led Tahiti and Hawai to throw away their idols, and which has adorned

those tropical islands with Christian villages and praying families; and even the wild Indian hunter, in the gloomy ravines of the Rocky Mountains, turns aside from the pursuit of the buffalo and the bear, to listen to this wonderful story of a Savior's love; and, as he listens, he weeps, and his heart melts, and he becomes a man of peace and prayer. He gives up his wandering life, and settles in a humble home, cultivating his garden and his field: he leads his little children to school, and commends them in morning and evening prayer to God. It is the doctrine of the cross of Christ—Christ and him crucified,—which is now fast sending piety and peace unto all the habitations of cruelty.

And can you, my young reader, harden your heart against this affecting story? When God, your heavenly Father, has so loved you, that he gave his Son to die to redeem you, can you withhold your heart from him? When Jesus Christ left the glory that he had with the Father before the world was, the joys of heaven, and the adoration of angels, and came to this world to suffer and to die the cruel death of the cross, that he might atone for your sins and prepare the way for your entrance into heaven, can you be ungrateful to him? The daughters of the poor heathen are turning to him. The children

born in the forest, wild as the wolf or the bear, are becoming the gentle disciples of the Savior. colored girls of India, and of Africa, who have never heard a father's prayers, and have never been taught by a pious mother to love the Lord, have heard from the missionaries what God has done to save them; and they are giving their hearts to the Savior. And can you be willing to remain ungrateful to this Savior, to whom the heathen children of Asia, and Africa, and the islands of the sea, are giving their hearts and devoting their lives?

When the day of judgment comes, you will see many of them on the right hand of God, in peace and happiness. The Savior will look upon them with love; the angels of God will gather around them, and welcome them to heaven. The golden gates of the celestial city will be thrown open, and, as the Savior says to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father," they will enter that happy world with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. And can you be willing to be found in the left-hand throng; to have the Savior frown upon you as having rejected his love; to have all the good angels avoid you, as an ungrateful sinner against their Father, and then to hear the awful doom—"De-

part, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?"

And should this be your final doom, as you depart into the gloom of the world of woe, how bitterly will you reflect upon your misspent life! "I have had the Bible," you would say, "and the Sabbath, and Christian books; I have been taught to pray, and have been entreated by pious friends, and Sabbath-school teachers, and faithful preachers of the gospel, to obey the Savior, and prepare for the day of judgment; but I neglected all their entreaties; and now I am lost forever."

As I write these lines, feeling deeply their truth, as I look forward to the day of judgment, and think that your condition and feelings may be, then, such as I have now described, I know not how, with sufficient earnestness, to entreat you to make immediate preparation to meet your God. It was in view of this anguish of your spirit—anguish which in the world of woe can never cease—that our blessed Savior's sympathies were so deeply moved that he not only was willing to send his Spirit to strive with you, but even left himself the joys of heaven, and suffered and died, that he might save your soul. Think not, then, that any importunity can be too earnest; think not that any one can feel

too deeply upon this all-important subject. Compared with the salvation of the soul, every thing else dwindles into insignificance.

And God has promised you, if you will sincerely ask it, the assistance of his Holy Spirit to enable you to triumph over all your sins. In temptation, the Spirit, if sought for, will come to your aid. In the hour of weakness, the Holy Spirit will make you strong. When in doubt and perplexity respecting duty, wisdom from on high will be given in answer to your prayers, to make the path of duty plain.

And now, are you not ready and willing to consecrate your heart to the Savior? Can you not deliberately, prayerfully, and forever make the surrender of your heart to him, resolving, every day, as long as you live, to abstain from every thing you think to be wrong, and to do every thing your conscience tells you to be right? If so, enter solemnly into the following covenant, after having offered sincerely and fervently the prayer:

"O Lord God, my Heavenly Father! Thou hast made me, and I am indebted to thee for every blessing of my life. I ought always to have loved thee, and to have obeyed thee. But, instead of this, I have been very ungrateful for

all thy goodness, and have often done that which I knew to be wrong. I have no claim upon thy mercy; but thou hast been so kind, notwithstanding my ingratitude and sin, as to give thy Son to die to save me. And I now, relying upon the merits of Jesus Christ my Savior, pray that thou wilt, for his sake, forgive my sins. I will endeavor, O God, with thy assistance, hereafter to live a holy life. Wilt thou now enable me to make the entire consecration of my heart to thee, and ever to keep the covenant vows I now make."

COVENANT.

"Heavenly Father! I do now solemnly promise, and call all the angels in heaven to witness and record my promise, that I will endeavor ever hereafter to do every thing I think will be pleasing in thy sight. I will strive to abstain from every thing which my conscience, as enlightened by thy Word, tells me to be wrong. Here, Lord, I promise that I will try constantly to have all my thoughts holy, my conversation pure, my actions right. I do here make the most entire and solemn consecration of myself, my mind, my heart, my all to thee. Conscious of my entire dependence upon the

Holy Spirit to enable me to keep my resolutions, and yet convinced that divine assistance will be afforded me according to my wants, I make this my solemn and irrevocable vow. I do it deliberately, understandingly, and with the full conviction that its violation will render me utterly inexcusable in the great day of trial. O, blessed Savior, come to the aid of thy frail and sinful child. Holy, Holy Spirit, make my heart thy temple; sanctify me wholly; present me faultless before God's throne. Father in heaven, wilt thou condescend to hear these my solemn vows, and help me, for Jesus Christ's sake, to keep them forever."

Now, are you willing to enter into such a covenant with your Maker? Can you read the preceding prayer, and offer it to God as your own, and then copy off the covenant, adding to it such thoughts as may occur to you as appropriate, sign your name to it, and thus commence a new life of entire devotedness to God?

This is the way to commence a Christian life. This is the change in character to which the Bible alludes when it says of the Christian, "Old things have passed away, and all things have become new." This is the meaning of

our Savior's declaration, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he can not be my disciple." This is the "strait gate and the narrow way which leads to everlasting life," and it is indeed true "that few there be that find it." Are you willing to enter in at the strait gate? This is the point of separation between the regenerate and the unregenerate. This is the test by which we are to try our hearts and ascertain whether they are yet changed into the image of Christ, or are still unrenewed. It is this act of self-surrender, sincerely formed and perseveringly kept, which constitutes one a Christian.

If you will go to God, and thus, in contrition and love, devote yourself to him, he will be indeed your Father, and he will regard you as his beloved child. If you are not willing to do this, nothing else you can do will he be willing to receive as a substitute. He will look upon you as a rebel against him, refusing to submit to his authority. While in this state of estrangement from him, nothing you do will be acceptable in his sight; the frown of his displeasure will follow you wherever you go.

Here, then, is the question for you to decide; and upon its decision is suspended your eternal destiny. It is a point of duty so plain and

simple that the youngest child can understand it. It is simply saying *yes*, or *no*, to the clearly-revealed, well-known will of God. If you say *yes*, and endure to the end in living according to that declaration, you are a Christian, and all the angels of heaven love you as their sister; and soon they will welcome you with the warmest acclamations to their happy, celestial home. If you say *no*, be it ever so faintly, so silently,—nay, more, if fearing to say *no*, you say nothing, and simply decline saying *yes*,—the decision is recorded in the book of God against you. There is written in the book of judgment opposite to your name, *This child refuses to submit to God.*

It is by no means improbable that many who read this chapter, will, at its close, come to a decision in favor or against the service of God, which will be final. The emotions you are now cherishing are perhaps those which are to decide your destiny. The struggle with which your bosom is probably agitated while reading these lines, will soon subside into the peace and the joy of entire submission to God, or into awful insensibility and spiritual death. Indeed this may be, in the providence of God, the last warning which will ever be addressed to you; the path of duty being made plain—the alter-

native of accepting or rejecting the Savior being fairly presented—your present choice may be the one which God will regard as final, and he may soon take you to the eternal world to abide the consequences.

Many children who read this book will die before another year shall pass away; and why may not you, who are now reading it, be one of those who will not live another year? You must therefore decide the question of consecrating your heart to God, in view of an early appearance at his bar. You may be called, within a few weeks, to answer to him for the choice you now make. Nothing can be more solemn and awful than the thought, that should you decline now giving your heart to the Savior, you may, within a few weeks, be in your grave, and your soul reaping the recompense of reward in an unchanging eternity of sorrow.

On the other hand, no thought can be more animating and delightful, than that you may now, if you have not done it before, secure your salvation. The Lord is waiting to be gracious; the Savior is ready to welcome you. If you now, like Joshua of old, resolve, "as for me, I will serve the Lord," and if this decision is made under a sense of your dependence upon the Holy Spirit, then is your salvation

secured ; then, let death come when it may, it will be a welcome messenger to introduce you to joys such as your heart never has conceived. Whatever may be the vicissitudes of your earthly lot, the Lord will lead you safely through every scene of life, and finally welcome you with his parental blessing, to that world where there shall be no more painful struggle against temptation and sin.

Let me, then, entreat you, as you value your everlasting happiness, to read again the preceding prayer and covenant, and inquire of yourself, if you can sincerely offer that prayer and adopt that covenant. Reflect deeply upon it ; count the cost ; reflect upon the reward of obedience, the penalty of disobedience ; then go to your chamber, fall upon your knees before God, and in the most fervent prayer your lips can utter, implore his forgiveness for the past, and his aid for the future. Then, with pen and paper, copy the covenant, with such additions as you may choose to make, sign your name to it, and upon your knees offer it most solemnly to God, as your final and inviolable vow. And, each succeeding day, read the covenant over, with many prayers that you may be reminded of your vows, and quickened to duty.

This is the way to commence a Christian

life. It is, however, but the commencement. It is a good and happy beginning, and, if you persevere in this course, it will lead to a most glorious ending. But you must not forget that the declaration of the Bible is, "He *that endureth to the end*, the same shall be saved." PERSEVERANCE must be your motto. He only is the true saint who perseveres. Perfect holiness must be the great object of our desires. Like Paul, you must not feel that you have already attained all that is necessary; but, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, you must press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

CHAPTER VIII.

EVERY-DAY DUTY.

It is very frequently the case that a young person becomes much interested in religion, and, for a time, is faithful in prayer, and conscientious in the discharge of every known duty. Thus he continues for a few months manifesting the gentleness, the amability, and the tenderness of conscience of the young Christian. He is so affectionate and obedient to the wishes of his parents, so kind and yielding to his brothers and sisters, that home becomes a scene of new and unusual enjoyment. He is so diligent in his studies at school, and so careful to exert a good influence in preserving order and peace, that his teacher is highly gratified with the change. His own countenance beams with serenity, and at once tells, to all who see him, that he is more happy than he ever was before. After persevering in this new course of life, and enjoying this happy frame of mind, for a few months, gradually he neglects

prayer, ceases to watch over his conduct, and, before he is even aware of it himself, becomes sadly insensible to all religious obligations.

Such changes are not unfrequent with persons of mature age; but they are so very common with the young, that is not considered prudent to receive young persons to the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, until they have for a year or two manifested the spirit of a Christian. Christian principle must be enduring. If we would have our sins forgiven, and be received to heaven, we must, as long as we live, try to become more and more holy. We must feel that we have never attained to that perfection of character which God requires, but must, day after day, and year after year, endeavor to acquire more humility, gentleness, and loveliness of character, and to have more intimate communion with God.

I wish in this chapter to guide the reader to the every-day duties of the Christian. I wish to show how you should manifest the spirit of Christ, in the midst of all the peculiar temptations, and enjoyments, and trials of childhood.

In my school-boy days, if I rightly remember, I thought it would be much easier to lead a Christian life when I became a man. I thought it must be far more difficult to be a consistent

disciple of the Savior, in the midst of all the temptations of youth, and surrounded by playmates at school, than it would be when I grew up to manhood, and had the character and resolution of mature years. But this, though a common feeling, is a very great mistake. The trials and temptations of youth and manhood are different in kind, but not very different in degree. On many accounts, the temptations of mature life are far the most severe. A man has cares and troubles which the young can hardly imagine. His time and his thoughts are greatly occupied by the pressure of his business. He has a family to support, and often is worn down with toil and care. Then, again, his habits are all formed, and are not so easily changed. It is also very difficult for him to break away from the associates with whom he has been familiar for perhaps many years.

The young, on the contrary, have hardly any of these obstacles to encounter. Before their habits of feeling and action are formed, they can, with comparative ease, enter the narrow way which leads to life. If you ever intend to become a Christian, *now* is, by far, the best time. You can more easily commence a Christian life now, than at any other period.

And what is it to be a Christian? It is just

to do right; to do right to God, and right to your fellow-creatures. God made you. God gives you all your blessings and enjoyments. God wishes soon to take you from this world, to be forever happy with him in heaven. It is right that you should love God, and do every thing you can to please him. Instead of this, you have been ungrateful for all his favors, and have often done that which you knew to be wrong. It is now right that you should be very penitent for having thus sinned against your best benefactor. Unless you are thus penitent you greatly increase your sin. Every day, every hour of impenitency adds to your guilt, and deepens the displeasure of God.

God has given to us his written laws—written in the Bible, and confirmed by an enlightened conscience. He has thus told us what we must do, and what we must not do. These laws are probably, in their spirit, the same with those which are proclaimed throughout all God's empire. He in infinite wisdom, has seen it to be necessary to attach to the violation of this law the penalty of endless destruction. You have broken this law. We have all done so, and incurred the dreadful penalty. God tells us, in the Bible, that he has devised a plan by which he can save us, and yet uphold the

dignity of his broken law. He has given his Son Jesus Christ to die in our stead, "to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." For reasons satisfactory to God,—no matter whether we can understand them or not,—he sees it to be necessary, for the dignity and stability of his moral government, that sin should not pass unpunished. He therefore gave his Son, to bear the burden of our sins. And now, if we are ever saved, we must not only repent of sin, but we must trust in this Savior, who has died for us. We must cherish the feelings which are necessarily connected with the cordial admission that Christ has borne our sins in his own body on the tree; the feelings of humility and contrition, in view of our own unworthiness; the feelings of gratitude and of ardent love, which ought to glow in our bosoms, in view of our redemption from eternal punishment, by the voluntary sufferings and death of our Savior Jesus Christ.

This is the Bible plan of salvation. Some think that they can appreciate its beauty, its excellency, its necessity; others think that they can not see why it should be necessary for God to adopt a measure so wonderful. But it is no matter whether we can appreciate the necessity of this arrangement or not. This is the plan

which God has adopted. This is the scheme of salvation taught in the New Testament, and there is salvation in none other. And this plan is found to be practically so adapted to the wants and the weakness of the human mind, that from generation to generation, among all nations, the most savage as well as the most enlightened, it has afforded solace to the afflicted and support to the dying.

You must come to God, therefore, penitent for your sins, and trusting in this Savior. This is what is called *the foundation of Christian character;* and it is in reference to this, that it is written in the Bible, "Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." But the question arises, How are you to manifest, in daily life, the spirit of the Christian? It certainly is not by assuming solemnity of countenance, and discarding the associates and the appropriate joys of childhood. I know not why you may not enjoy a game of ball as well, if you are governed by Christian principle, as you could if you were living without any regard to your Maker. Nay, it is certain that sincere piety will give a new relish to all your best enjoyments.

There is, in fact, nothing which can contribute so much to any one's happiness as heart-

felt religion. It enables one to enjoy the storm and the sunshine. It adds new charms to the summer morning, and new attractions to the winter evening. It matters not whether we are old or young, whether we are rich or poor, whether we are learned or unlearned,—sincere love to God not only enables us more highly to enjoy every thing really valuable, but contributes more than every thing else combined to make us happy. Look into the Christian family, where the pure spirit of devotion reigns, and where the feelings of all are controlled by a constant desire to please God. You can not find, in all the ranks of the gay and the worldly, so happy a home.

Have you, my reader, ever at any time endeavored to serve God? Have you ever, for a season, had the feeling that your sins were forgiven, and that God was looking upon you with parental kindness? Did not the thought make you happy? Were you not more happy then than ever before? And if you have now lost those feelings, are you not now almost constantly oppressed with uneasiness and dissatisfaction? Can you now enjoy your daily sports with as much heartfelt satisfaction as you could then? Do you go to bed at night, or awake in the morning, with as contented and joyful a

heart? No! It is impossible. And I am confident that your friends will say that even your countenance shows that you are less happy than you then were.

If now any child wishes to live a daily life of humble and consistent piety, I would recommend to him to pursue some such course as the following.

When you awake in the morning, before you leave your chamber, you sincerely thank God for his kind care of you during the night, and pray that he will protect you from danger, and temptation, and sin during the day. Kneeling at your bedside, you offer some such prayer as the following:

"O God, my Heavenly Father, I thank thee that thou hast preserved my life through another night, and that I again see the light of the morning. I shall be exposed to many temptations this day; and I beseech thee to enable me to abstain from every sin, and to cherish those feelings, and to manifest that spirit, which will be pleasing to thee.

"May I make my parents happy by constantly doing that which will please them. May I, by a kind and obliging disposition, contribute to the enjoyment of my brothers and sisters.

And especially, O God, I pray that thou wilt enable me to improve my time at school; that my precious privileges may not be wasted; that I may make rapid improvement in my studies, and prepare for a useful life.

"Be with me, Heavenly Father, all the day, that I may not think a wicked thought, that I may not speak an improper word, that I may not do a wrong thing. As I look back upon my past life, I see that I have spent many days unmindful of thee. I have thus incurred the penalty thou hast justly threatened against sinners. O God, how can I be sufficiently grateful that thy son has died to save me? I desire to trust in him, and I pray that thou wilt, for his sake, forgive me.

"Hear, I entreat thee, and answer this my morning prayer. I offer it to thee in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and the praise shall ever be given to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen."

You now go from your chamber. Is not your heart comparatively at peace? Does not even your countenance show the serenity of your mind? As you sit down at the breakfast-table, do you not feel happy, and are you not immediately conscious that your parents, and

your brothers and sisters, regard you with unusual affection?

There is something in this state of mind which not only makes the possessor happy, but almost resistlessly attracts the love of all with whom he associates. The spirit of kindness which reigns in his heart, the desire which he manifests to make all around him happy, secures to him, in return, kindness and good-will. During all the forenoon, the influence of your morning prayer continues, giving quietness to your own heart, and promoting the happiness and the peace of the family. Your carefulness to avoid irritation, your willingness to yield your own wishes to gratify the desires of your brothers and sisters, secures to those around you a vast amount of happiness. You join them in all their amusements, and with a grateful heart enjoy the pleasures which God thus gives you.

The hour for school arrives. It is with you a matter of conscience, of Christian duty, to be at your seat in proper season. As you walk along to school, you offer a silent but earnest prayer to God, that he will enable you to pursue your studies with diligence and success. You implore his aid to enable you to resist all

the temptations to which you may be exposed, in the school-room or on the play-ground.

The influence of this prayer, even though it be but little more in your mind than the serious thought of your need of watchfulness and care, secures your mind from wandering thoughts, and prepares you for close application to study. You can now enjoy intellectual effort. The perplexing sum in arithmetic becomes less puzzling, from the ease with which you apply to it all the undivided energies of your mind. And you even turn over the leaves of your Latin dictionary, or your Greek lexicon, with pleasurable emotions. The school-room is transformed from a place of irksome restraint to a scene of active enjoyment. Your teacher becomes, at once, one of your most beloved benefactors and friends.

Recess comes. You are with the foremost on the play-ground. You have studied with close application, and have now a relish for a few moments of play. A dispute arises between two of the boys. You good-naturedly allay the rising strife, and make peace. A ball is accidentally thrown to a distance, and a little contention is arising as to whose duty it is to go for it. You at once settle the dispute by laughingly running yourself and getting the ball.

You are playing some game in which sides are chosen, and there is one boy too many. He can not be chosen by either party without making uneven sides. As he stands looking on upon the game, and wishing that he could join in the sport, you, after playing a little while, call out to him to take your place, and let you rest.

One of your schoolmates is lame, and unable to join in the sports of the play-ground. He sits alone upon a rock, looking upon the games



THE PLAY-GROUND.

of his more athletic companions, and sighs to think of the calamity, by which he is debarred from such enjoyments. The other boys, careless and unreflecting, manifest but little sympathy for his lonely condition. You think of him. You strive to cultivate in your heart feelings of interest in his behalf. No matter whether he be an agreeable or a disagreeable boy, you remember your Savior, who was kind even to the unthankful and the evil. While others are playing, you go and sit by him, even though it be a serious sacrifice to you to lose your share in the game.

These are the peculiar opportunities God presents to you, that you may manifest the spirit of the Christian. And it is doubtful whether the man, surrounded with all the cares of busy life, has a better opportunity to serve his Maker by making others happy, and by setting the example of Christian conduct, than such occasions as these afford to you. You may thus make the school-room and the play-ground promotive of the most precious moral discipline. You may thus be training yourself for a very happy and a very useful life, by cultivating those virtues which will cause others to love you, and which will give you influence. You may thus, by your example, be inducing

many of your young associates to cherish the feelings and to exhibit the spirit which the gospel requires.

It is a very mistaken notion, often entertained by young persons, that they can not do much good, because there is no active business of religion in which they can engage. In your daily studies; in your daily sports; in all your daily intercourse with your associates, you may be effectually serving your Maker, and securing his approbation. The piety of a child is as pleasing in his sight as the piety of a man, and it may be as useful. Some incident of apparently a very trifling nature, in the sports of the play-ground, may produce an impression upon an associate's mind, which shall be as lasting as life, and which shall in fact not only decide his character, but shall be the stimulus to the most heroic deeds.

Thus you pass the busy hours of the day, at home and at school, watching over yourself, endeavoring to regulate every thought, and word, and action, by God's holy law. Occasionally, you are called, for Christ's sake, to endure reproach. For instance, a boy treats you with rudeness and insult. He is of a malicious disposition, and seems inclined to quarrel with you. Others accuse you of cowardice, for pa-

tiently bearing his ill-treatment, and by taunts and jeers endeavor to provoke you to retaliate. It requires great decision of character, great firmness and moral courage, and even strong Christian principle, to overcome such a temptation. Men have their temptations. They are different in kind from those of boys, but I think not greater in degree. It may be as difficult for you to resist such a temptation as this,—that is, it may require as much strength of Christian principle, as to resist any temptation, to which you will afterward be exposed in manhood. And if you yield to this temptation, it weakens your power of resistance. Whenever any new trial comes, you more easily fall.

God allows you to be exposed to such trials, as a part of your probation,—as discipline for your mental and moral powers. And when you are striving to resist all allurements to sin, to obtain the entire mastery over your passions, you are as much serving God and answering the great end of your being, as you can be, in any of the apparently more important business of life. The trial which it is necessary for you to encounter in obeying God are by no means small. God does not intend that they shall be small. He knows just how severe they are. And he exposes you to them, because he sees it

to be best for the formation of your character for eternity, that you should learn to be morally courageous, and that you should show your resolution to serve him, though encountering strong opposition. Thus you must learn in youth to dare to do your duty. You must learn not to be afraid of the ridicule of the wicked. You must learn, calmly, quietly, and good-humoredly, to do that which is right, and to refuse to do that which is wrong, whatever others may say. And if you do not learn this in youth, you probably never will learn it. You will be a fickle, inconstant man, unworthy of confidence or respect.

There is hardly any courage of more difficult attainment, than that which enables one to dare to do right. And there is certainly no quality of mind more indispensable to a useful and happy life. It is the want of this moral courage which leads so many persons to the ruin of intemperance, and to death by duelling.

A young man is invited by his companions to join them in some plan of pleasure which his conscience condemns. He knows that it is wrong to consent. But he dares not decline. He is invited again. He fears that he will be ridiculed if he refuses. He is urged a third time; and again he complies, because he has

not the courage to refuse. Thus he becomes the slave of other persons. He fears to do what he thinks to be right, and from the apprehension of ridicule, becomes the servant of another's will to do his bidding. Is it not ignoble and disgraceful to yield to such cowardice? One who acts thus, as he goes on through life, has his character formed by others. He has not strength of mind to break away from dissipated associates. He has no resolution to resist the temptations with which they beset him, till at last he lies down in an early grave. I have seen many a youth, of the fairest promise, thus ruined forever, for want of that moral courage which dares to do right. I could give you the history of not a few, who, when boys, were most amiable in disposition, and of active minds, who might now have been among the most influential of the community, but who, from want of this decision of character, yielded to one temptation after another, till they went down in disgrace and sorrow to the grave.

See this man, challenged by some unprincipled wretch to fight a duel. He is a husband and a father. His wife and his children are at home. They are dependent upon him for support, for almost every earthly joy. He is bound by the most solemn obligations to take care of

them, and not to leave them, deprived of his support.

He receives from some worthless enemy of holiness and of happiness, a challenge to fight a duel. He sits in his chamber, with his pen in hand, meditating respecting the answer which he shall return. He thinks, "What would my poor wife, what would my dear children say, if they knew what I am contemplating? If I am killed, my wife has no earthly protector! How can she alone support the children? How wretched must they be, when the tidings reach them that I am dead—killed in a duel! Have I any right thus to expose them to all this wretchedness? How many days of sorrow, and nights of weeping, must my family endure if I am thus taken from them!

"And how can I answer to God for appearing thus unbidden in his presence? for thus abandoning the most sacred duties of life, and leaving my helpless family to the inheritance of years of sorrow?"

Then again, he thinks, "If I decline this challenge, I shall be called a coward. Many will ridicule me." He is afraid to do right, lest he should encounter the scoffs of the dissolute. If he had more moral courage, he would triumph over such fears But from early boy-

hood he has been acting according to the opinions of others, not his own. And now he is the slave of the worthless—so entirely their slave, that his character, his life, and the happiness of his family, are entirely in their hands. Instead of exercising manly fearlessness and decision, and determining to do what his conscience tells him to be right, though the whole world should join in the chorus of ridicule, with a mean and cowardly spirit, he surrenders himself to the circumstances in which he finds himself entangled.



THE DUEL.

He accepts the challenge. He is soon found upon the field, with the instrument of death in his hand. A ball enters his body from his opponent's gun, and he falls dead upon the ground. There he lies, the victim of moral cowardice. He was afraid to do that which he knew to be right. He had not sufficient strength of principle and boldness of heart to brave the reproach of those

who are totally unworthy of regard. His wife is a widow. Her heart is broken with anguish. Years of lamentation are her lot. His children are fatherless. The guide of their youth is taken from them, and they are left to encounter the temptations of life, and to struggle against its hardships with no father to guide and help them.

Many have thus perished, for want of acquiring this moral courage in boyhood. They have yielded, in the school-room and on the playground, to the importunities of those who would entice them to do wrong. Every time they yield, weakens their power of future resistance; and thus they grow up with no decision of character, ever ready to fall before the least breath of temptation.

You should ever remember this, when solicited to do that which your conscience disapproves. By yielding to the temptation thus presented, you not only commit a great sin at the time, but you expose yourselves to future consequences of the most terrible nature. You prepare the way for a rapid descent to ruin. You begin to slide down the hill, and it will be very hard to stop.

Reflect, then, whenever tempted to the least wrong-doing, that consequences of the most

momentous importance may be suspended on your decision. Every triumph over temptation enables you to triumph the next time more easily. Your resolution is fortified, your character is matured by the trial. One victory of this kind in boyhood, may give you a strength and firmness of purpose, which shall be an invaluable blessing to you through your whole life, and indeed through your whole immortal existence.

These are the ways in which you are to manifest the character of a Christian. This is the discipline by which God is training you for the society of angels, and for brighter worlds above. Every day you will have your trials, many, and perhaps severe ones. If you meet them with a right spirit, and, by looking to God for help, triumph over them, they will prove your richest blessings. If, on the contrary, you yield, and fall before them, day after day, you will be growing more weak in mind and heart, till you are lost, not only to usefulness and happiness in this life, but also in that to come.

As you pass along through the hours of the day, then, be careful to act continually under the influence of Christian principle, in all that you do. And when the day is over, and you lie in darkness and silence upon your bed, re-

flecting upon the scenes of the day, endeavoring to recall each thought, and word, and deed, you will take great pleasure in the retrospection. You will, however, probably, every night, find very much for which you must implore the divine forgiveness. In your self-examination you ask yourself such questions as the following:—

1. "Was I faithful and sincere in my prayers this morning?

2. "Have I been all the day affectionate and obedient to my father and my mother?

3. "Have I done all that I could, by being kind and obliging, to make my brothers and sisters happy, and to make every thing in the family peaceful and pleasant?

4. "Have I improved my time at school to the utmost of my power, in studying with diligence, and in trying to promote quietness and good order?

5. "Have I resisted all the risings of passion avoiding every feeling of irritation or of anger of envy or vanity?

6. "Have I been conscientious in doing every thing that I thought to be right, and in avoiding every thing that my conscience told me to be wrong?

7. "Has it been my prevailing desire this day

to please my Maker? Has this been the motive which I have regarded as more important than all others?"

Even if you were able, at the close of every day, to answer all these questions in the affirmative, you would then be entitled to no special credit; for you would only have done what you ought to have done. You would merely have done that which it would have been utterly inexcusable for you to have neglected. And yet the thought that you have been in some measure faithful in duty, will give you great peace and satisfaction.

As you now look back upon your past life, at the close of how many days do you suppose you could have returned an affirmative answer to the above questions? Has there ever been a single day, during your life, at the close of which you could say, I have this day committed no wrong, and done all my duty? If there has not been one such day, how great a sinner are you in God's sight! Ought you not deeply to feel your sin? Ought you not earnestly to pray for forgiveness? And ought you not to feel very grateful to that Savior who has died to atone for your sins, who has borne the penalty of them in his own body on the tree?

You will thus feel every night, if you are faithful in self-examination. Instead of being puffed up with spiritual pride, in view of your own fancied righteousness; instead of offering the prayer of the Pharisee, "O God, I thank thee that I am not as others are," you will be humble and penitent, and your evening prayer will be, "O God, be merciful to me a sinner."

Suppose after this self-examination, and before falling to sleep, you offer such a prayer as the following:

"Heavenly Father, I thank thee that thou hast preserved my life another day, and that, surrounded with so many comforts, I lie down to sleep this night. My sins, this day, have been many. In thought, in word, and in deed, I have done much that is wrong. Thine eye has been upon me all the day. Thou hast seen how I have employed each hour, and hast known every thought of my heart. For all the support thou hast this day afforded me in resisting temptation, I would offer to thee my gratitude; and for the sake of the Savior, who hath died for sinners such as I am, I entreat thee to forgive all my offenses. I thank thee, O God, that thou hast provided a way, by which, though a sinner, I may be saved from my sins. May I

be duly penitent, and more carefully try to do all thy will.

"Wilt thou now take care of me this night. And when I awake in the morning, wilt thou prepare me to live a more holy life another day. Be with me, my Father and my Friend, as long as I shall live, and when thou dost remove me from the world, O, take me to dwell with thee forever; and thine shall be the glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen."

These emotions are soothing to the soul. If they are the sincere and deeply-seated feelings of your heart, they will afford you tranquillity and joy. Let others say that religion causes melancholy; you will find that your religion is the source of your purest joys. Every year it will diminish your exposure to sorrow, by giving you a more perfect triumph over all troublesome passions, and rendering you less liable to fall before temptation. As you pass through the scenes of youth, and enter upon the toils and cares of manhood, you will be fortified, by established principles, for all the scenes through which you may be called to pass. And when, in old age, should your life be spared so long, you lie down upon your bed to die, you will look foward to eternity, with a calm and peace-

ful spirit, which will be of more value to you than countless worlds.

This is religion. A transient feeling of penitence is not piety. A few days or weeks of watchfulness and prayer do not constitute the Christian life. "He that endureth to the end shall be saved," says God. If you would be the friend of God, you must decide to be *his forever*. You must resolve, and persevere in your resolution, to live in watchfulness, and penitence, and prayer, till God shall remove you to another world. This is the way to be saved. This is the narrow path which leads to life. How true is the assertion of the Bible, as expressed by the poet!—

> "Broad is the road that leads to death,
> And thousands walk together there;
> While Wisdom shows a narrow path,
> With here and there a traveler."

And can you entertain any doubt whether this be the happiest mode of life? God loves to see his children happy; and probably the reason why he has, in his Word, so earnestly enforced the necessity of living in this way is, that he sees that this, and this only, can promote your best enjoyment. These are those ways of wisdom which are declared to be pleas-

antness, and those paths which we are assured are peace.

Can I appeal to the experience of any reader? Have you not invariably found that when you most earnestly endeavored to serve God, by a prayerful and conscientious life, that you were the most happy? And is it not the testimony of good men in all ages of the world, that they have found the service of God a delight? that in his service they have experienced joys which they never could find while neglecting him?

It is strange that any persons can think that any one can be a Christian, can be in any way pleasing God, who does not live as I have above described. But it can not be denied that there are many persons who seem to think that a life of prayer and watchfulness over one's heart, is not necessary to prepare for heaven. Such persons invariably have no relish for spiritual duties. They take no pleasure in prayer, or in any heartfelt communion with God. Almost entirely neglecting their Maker themselves, and merely falling in with the general arrangements of society around them, as to moral conduct and external acts of worship, they strive to quiet conscience, by adopting the principle, that

prayer, and penitence, and faith in Christ are not essential to salvation.

It is very strange that any one with the Bible *in hand*—I ought rather to say *within his reach*, for such persons are seldom seen reading the Bible—can venture to express such an opinion as this, even though there be the strong motive of excusing one's self for the neglect of duty, and quieting the compunctions of conscience. Indeed it would seem that the common sense of any one must show that God ought to be loved,—that he ought to be the object of the warmest affections of the heart; and that we all ought to be doing every thing in our power to make others happy, and to be growing holy ourselves.

The person who adopts not this mode of life, whether he be a man or a boy, is an impenitent sinner in the sight of God. He is entirely unprepared to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. And if he is deceiving himself with the expectation that God will overlook his sins, and receive him from his prayerless life on earth, to happiness in heaven, he will soon find his dreadful error. There are those, God tells us, who will exclaim, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

Do not, then, allow yourself to be deceived and betrayed by such opinions. Do not imitate the example of a prayerless and irreligious world. Do not follow the thronging crowds which press along the broad way which leads to ruin. Do not imagine that there is any way by which you can be saved, but by repentance for sin, and faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I have said that there are many who seem to think that they are Christians, while living in the almost entire neglect of their Maker. And still I am inclined to think, that there are very few in Christian lands who *really* do think so. There is almost always a feverish excitability about such persons, whenever they speak upon the subject of religion, which shows that they are ill at ease. And though they may make very confident assertions, and do all in their power to beguile others into the same sentiments, they seldom in life manifest the composure of settled faith, or in death exemplify the assurance of the undoubting Christian.

Do not allow your immortal hopes to be wrecked upon this shallow rock. It is indeed so shallow, that it ought not to deceive any intelligent mind. Love your Maker—cherish for him, by meditation and daily secret prayer, the

most sincere and ardent affection. Be grateful to your Savior. Be not ashamed to own his name; to avow, before friend and foe, that you wish to be his disciple. Daily examine your own heart and conduct, that you may be penitent for sin, and know the peculiar temptations by which you are most endangered. Pray to God for daily assistance to overcome temptation. And endeavor in every way, as long as you live, to cultivate every virtue, and to do all the good in your power, by making others better and happier. Let these be the unchanging principles by which you will govern your life. Then you will have a reason for the hope that is within you. Your anticipation of heaven will be founded upon a reasonable support, worthy the reliance of a rational mind. And if others are disposed to trust themselves in the "broad way," thinking it will lead them to heaven, pity them, and pray for them, and do all you can to convince them of their error, but do not, O, do not follow them.

I have seen many of these infatuated men on the bed of dangerous sickness, and in the hour of death. I have heard their unavailing lamentations over a misspent life, and witnessed the anguish with which they contemplated their appearance before God's bar in judgment. It is

true that such persons often die in great insensibility; the thoughtlessness and unconcern which have attended them through life reign, in undiminished power, in the hour of death. But not unfrequently they die in the extremest depths of horror and despair. The spirit suffers more than the body, in the hour of departure. The gloom of the world of woe seems to come up and settle around the dying bed.

If you would die the death of the righteous, you must live the life of the righteous. If you would be acknowledged by the Savior before our Father who is in heaven, you must be ready to acknowledge and serve him here on earth. Even though surrounded by temptations, like those which beset Daniel in the court of Belshazzar, or threatened with a terrible death, as he was, in the den of lions, you must, like him, faithfully and perseveringly worship and serve God. Then you may have his tranquil spirit, and death can have for you no terrors.

But you are not to imagine that, if you are a Christian, you will therefore, in this life, be always happy. Man is born to sorrow. This is a world of trial. No one enters it without experiencing sorrow. Whether you are a Christian or not, you must endure sickness and pain. Your dearest friends must die. You can hardly

escape many hours of anxiety, and may, from mental or physical causes, occasionally suffer from depression of spirits.

But if you are sincerely a Christian, there are very many sorrows to which others are exposed, from which you are shielded. The sorrows of unrestrained passions you, in a great degree, escape. God preserves you, by your Christian principles, from falling into the woes of dissipation, into which those who are not Christians are ever in the greatest danger of falling. You have a far more calm and tranquil spirit than you could have without the supports and consolations of piety. And, above all, when sorrow does come; when, by a reverse of fortune, property flies away; or when sickness enters your dwelling, and your friends die; or when you are called upon to lie upon a dying bed—you have sources of comfort and of joy which the irreligious man can never know.

It is in the world to come that you are to reap the full enjoyment of serving God. There, in brighter spheres, among the suns and systems with which God has strewed infinity, with a perfectly holy heart, with angels for your associates, and with God's glory all

around, you will rejoice in unbounded and eternal joy.

But here is your state of trial and discipline. You can find no path through life in which you will not meet many sorrows. Be prepared, then, for these troubles. Know that they are your necessary lot. Try to make them the means of your spiritual improvement. Then you may learn the meaning of the poet—

> "Heaven's favors here are trials, not rewards,
> A call to duty, not release from care."

Afflictions fall upon all—the penitent and the impenitent, the sinner and the saint. But while those who are regardless of God are growing harder in heart and more wicked under their trials, and while they have no consolation to support them in adversity, the disciples of the Savior are deriving the most precious advantages from all their sorrows; their hearts are growing better by the discipline, and they are fast preparing for endless joy in heaven.

With whom, my young reader, will you cast your lot? You find many motives urging you to be a Christian. The Spirit of God, with its still, small voice, probably often strives with you to lead you back to your heavenly Father's

service. A faithful conscience often tells you your duty. The voice of the gospel preacher, the instructions of the Sabbath-school, the sacred silence of God's holy day, the mournful tones of the funeral bell, often remind you of the world to which you are going, and solicit you to prepare for its awful scenes. These are the means which God is ever using to lead you to him.

On the other hand, there are many temptations, seducing you to postpone repentance and neglect God. The natural heart feels a strong repugnance to the duties of self-examination and persevering, secret prayer. Thoughtless associates stand in the way of the surrender of your hearts and lives to God. You fear singularity. You are apprehensive of ridicule. Indolence suggests to you to remain contentedly as you are, without engaging in the struggle against sin.

Thus you, very probably, halt between two opinions. Like the Israelites of old, you hesitate in choosing whom you will serve. How immense are the consequences depending upon the decision!—no less than eternal holiness and happiness, or endless sin and misery. The Bible declares that good angels and lost spirits watch the progress of the struggle, which is,

perhaps, now agitating your mind. The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour; and there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Choose the Lord for your portion; consecrate your all to his service, and you will be indeed happy. You will have consolation in life's troubles, support in the hour of death, and eternal happiness in heaven.

CHAPTER IX.

INDUSTRY.

MANY young persons seem to think it is not of much consequence if they do not improve their time well when in youth, for they can make it up by diligence when they are older. They think it is disgraceful for *men* and *women* to be idle, but that there can be no harm for persons who are *young* to spend their time in any manner they please.

George Jones thought so. He was twelve years old. He went to an academy to prepare to enter college. His father was at great expense in obtaining books for him, clothing him, and paying his tuition. But George was idle. The preceptor of the academy would often tell him that if he did not study diligently when young, he would never succeed well. But George thought of nothing but present pleasure. Often would he go to school without having made any preparation for his morning lesson; and when called to recite with his class, he

would stammer, and hesitate, and make such blunders, that the rest of his class could not help laughing at him. He was one of the poorest scholars in school, because he was one of the most idle.

When the recess came, and all the boys ran out of the academy, upon the play-ground, idle George would come moping along in a very slow and idle manner. Instead of studying diligently while in school, he was indolent and usually half asleep. And then when the proper time for play came, he had no relish for it.

I recollect very well that, when *tossing up* for a game of ball, we used to choose every body on the play-ground before we chose George. And if there were enough to play without him, we used to leave him out. Thus was he unhappy in school and out of school. There is nothing which makes a person enjoy play so well as to study hard. When recess was over, and the rest of the boys returned fresh and vigorous to their studies, George might be seen lagging and moping along to his seat. Sometimes he would be asleep in school, sometimes he would pass his time in catching flies and penning them up in little holes, which he cut in his seat. And sometimes, when the preceptor's

back was turned, he would throw a paper ball across the room.

When the class was called up to recite, George would come drowsily along, looking ashamed of himself, as though he were going to be punished. The rest of the class stepped up to the recitation with alacrity, and appeared happy and contented. When it came George's turn to recite, he would be so long, and make such blunders, that all most heartily wished him out of the class.

At last George went with his class to enter college. Though he passed a very poor examination, he was admitted with the rest, for those who examined him thought it was possible that the reason why he did not answer the questions better was that he was frightened. Now came hard times for poor George. In college there is not much mercy shown to bad scholars ; and George had neglected his studies so long that he could not now keep up with his class, let him try ever so hard.

He could without much difficulty get along in the academy, where there were only two or three boys of his own class to laugh at him. But now he had to go into a large recitation-room, filled with students from all parts of the country. In the presence of all these he must

rise and recite to the professor. Poor fellow! He paid dear for his idleness. You would have pitied him, if you could have seen him trembling in his seat, every moment expecting to be called upon to recite. And when he was called upon, he could not recite at all. Sometimes he would make such ludicrous blunders, that the whole class would burst into a laugh. Such are the applauses idleness gets. He was wretched, of course. He had been idle so long, that he hardly knew how to apply his mind to study. All the good scholars avoided him; they were ashamed to be seen in his company. He became discouraged, and gradually grew dissipated.

The government of the college soon were compelled to suspend him. He returned in a few months, but did no better; and his father was then advised to take him away from college. He left college, despised by every one. A few months ago I met him in New York, a poor wanderer, without money or friends. Such are the wages of idleness. I hope every reader will, from this history, take warning, and "stamp improvement on the wings of time."

This story of George Jones, which is a true one, shows how sinful and ruinous it is to be idle. Every child who would do his duty, must

guard against this sin. But as I have given you one story, which shows the sad effects of indolence, I will now present you with another, more pleasing, which shows the rewards of industry.

Charles Bullard was a classmate of George. Charles was about of the same age with George, and did not possess naturally superior talents. Indeed, I doubt whether he was equal to him, in natural powers of mind. But Charles was a hard student. When quite young, he was always careful to be diligent in school. Sometimes, when there was a *very hard* lesson, instead of going out in the recess to play, he would stay in to study. He had resolved that his first object should be to get his lesson well, and then he could play with a good conscience.

He loved play as well as any body, and was one of the best players on the ground; I hardly ever saw any boy catch a ball better than he could. When playing any game every one was glad to get Charles on his side.

I have said that Charles would sometimes stay in at recess. This, however, was very seldom; it was only when the lesson was very hard indeed. Generally he was among the first upon the play-ground, and he was also among the first to go into school, when called

in. Hard study gave him a relish for play, and play again gave him a relish for hard study; so he was happy both in school and out. The preceptor could not help liking him, for he always had his lessons well committed, and never gave his teacher any trouble.

When he went to enter college, the preceptor gave him a good recommendation. He was able to answer all the questions which were put to him when he was examined. He had studied so well when he was in the academy, and was so thoroughly prepared for college, that he found it very easy to keep up with his class, and had much time for reading interesting books. But he would always first get his lesson well, before he did any thing else, and would review it just before recitation. When called upon to recite, he rose tranquil and happy, and very seldom made any mistake. The government of the college had a high opinion of him, and he was respected by all the students.

There was in the college a society made up of all of the best scholars. Charles was chosen a member of that society. It was the custom to choose some one of the society to deliver a public address every year. This honor was conferred on Charles; and he had studied so diligently, and read so much, that he delivered

an address, which was very interesting to all who heard it. At last he *graduated*, as it is called; that is, he finished his collegiate course, and received his degree. It was known by all that he was a good scholar, and by all he was respected. His father and mother, brothers and sisters, came, commencement day, to hear him speak. They all felt gratified, and loved Charles more than ever. Many situations of usefulness and profit were opened to him, for Charles was now a man, intelligent, and universally respected. He is now a useful and a happy man. He has a cheerful home, and is esteemed by all who know him.

Such are the rewards of industry. How strange is it, that any persons should be willing to live in idleness, when it will certainly make them unhappy! The idle boy is almost invariably poor and miserable; the industrious boy is happy and prospered.

But perhaps some child who reads this, asks, "Does God notice children in school?" He certainly does. And if you are not diligent in the improvement of your time, it is one of the surest of evidences that your heart is not right with God. You are placed in this world to improve your time. In youth you must be preparing for future usefulness. And if you do

not improve the advantages you enjoy, you sin against your Maker.

> "With books, or work, or healthful play,
> Let your first years be past,
> That you may give, for every day,
> Some good account at last."

When boys are told that their success in future life depends almost entirely upon the improvement they make in school, they do not really believe it. They do not, at once, see the connection between the studies they are pursuing, and their prosperity in any business, in which they may afterward engage. But you may depend upon it, that the only way in which you can become respected and useful as men, is to be studious as boys. If you are idle in school, thinking only of your ball, and your hoop, and your kite; if you thus waste your school-boy years in indolence and in play, when you become a man you will be ignorant and weak-minded. You will not be respected by your fellow-men. In all probability, you will not be successful in any business in which you may engage, and you will live and die in poverty and obscurity.

Your parents have lived long enough in the world to know this. They have seen what be-

comes of idle school-boys. Some of them become poor sailors, without home or friends. They wander over the ocean, living in the dismal forecastle of a ship, exposed to driving storms and drenching rains, till they die, and the deep ocean becomes their grave. They can not rise to take command of a ship, and thus acquire property so as to obtain a future home on land, because they are so ignorant, and have been so long accustomed to habits of idleness. And thus they live and die, poor, friendless, comfortless sailors. Others remain at home; but they have no influence over their fellow-men. They are not respected. In all probability, they live in poverty, and at last die, with few to mourn their loss.

Your parents see this, and that you may not thus live and die, they purchase books for you, and obtain a teacher, and send you to school. And every day you pass in diligent study tends to promote your usefulness and your happiness through the whole of your future life. It gives manliness and energy to your mind, and it prepares you successfully to grasp all the great concerns of the business world. If, on the other hand, you neglect these privileges, and spend your time in idleness, you incur a loss which you never can retrieve;

you darken your prospects for happiness through all the years of your manhood; you will be less respected, and successful, and influential as a man.

Henry and Carlos are studying geography. Henry is deeply interested in the study. He reads of Europe, of Asia, of Africa, of America. He learns where the lion roars, and where the orange and the cocoa-nut grow. He learns where the Arab gallops over the desert of sand, on his beautiful and light-footed horse. He learns where cities of civilization rise in their splendor; where wealth and refinement spread their richest charms, and where the savage prowls through the forest, and makes the solitudes of the wilderness echo with his shouts. His mind is strengthened by these instructions. He loves to let his imagination roam at will, among the majestic mountains, and along the vast rivers of this wonderful world. He becomes thus, more of a man—less of a boy. His increasing intelligence shines in his face. His instructor, his parents, and all his friends regard him with affection and esteem. And his own consciousness that he is making intellectual advances, animates him and makes him happy.

But Carlos is passing his time in indolence,

an idle, mischievous boy. He has neglected his studies so long, that his very countenance looks dull and stupid. He feels guilty and degraded, and is ashamed to look any one frankly in the face. At one time, you may see him in school, nodding on his bench, half asleep. By-and-by he wakes up, and with his knife begins to carve out a fly-cage in his bench, or is foolishly employed in making paper balls to throw about the room.

Carlos's father wishes to get him into business, and he goes to a merchant in the city to see if he will take him into his store, as a clerk. It is a fine situation. The young man who obtains it, and is faithful, has the prospect of being, in a few years, a partner in the firm, with the opportunity of securing to himself all that is comfortable in life—of taking a high stand in society—of being a man of usefulness, and influence, and respectability.

The merchant replies to Carlos's father, "I will make inquiries respecting your son, and if I find him to be such a boy as we want, I shall be very happy to take him."

He then goes to Carlos's teacher and says to him, "I have had an application from Carlos's father to take his son into my store, as a clerk. I want an active, intelligent, industrious boy,

and if you can recommend Carlos to me as such a lad, I shall be glad to take him."

"Why, sir," says the teacher, "I am sorry to say any thing against any one of my pupils, but I can not conscientiously recommend Carlos. The fact is, he will not do for you at all. He is a very dull and unfaithful boy. I have done every thing in my power to stimulate him to study, but it is all in vain. He is idle and mischievous, and unless there is soon a thorough change in his character, I fear that he will never be good for any thing.

"But there is Henry; he is a boy of very unusual promise. If you can get him, sir, you will have one in whose fidelity and industry you can place implicit reliance. There is not a more diligent and intelligent lad in my school."

"Can he write a good hand?" inquires the merchant.

"Very good indeed," replies the teacher; "he has been very careful about his writing, and has made wonderful improvement. Stop a moment, and I will show you his writing-book."

"Does he know much about arithmetic?" inquires the merchant. "We want a boy that is pretty quick at figures."

"Yes," replies the teacher, "he is an excellent scholar in arithmetic. He has gone through the double rule of three, and, for a boy of his age, I do not know of any one who understands arithmetic better."

"Well, how is he," continues the merchant, "in geography? We have transactions with almost all parts of the world, and it is very desirable that the boy we take, should know something about the various places with which we are connected."

"He is at the head of his class in that study," replies the teacher.

"He is just the boy we want, then," said the merchant. "But I wish that Carlos would do, for his father first applied for the situation. But you think he will not answer, do you?"

"I am confident he would not," replies the teacher. "I am sorry to say so, but it is out of the question. Why, here is his writing-book. Just look at it. See the blots and scrawls. And as to arithmetic, he actually does not know the multiplication-table. And in geography, and particularly in spelling, he is very backward indeed."

"Well, I am sorry for him," says the merchant. "These idle boys little know how they

are ruining themselves." He then goes home, and writes the following note to Carlos's father:

"Dear Sir,

"I find, upon inquiry, that your son will not answer our purpose. I regret very much, on his account, that it is so; but we must have a boy who writes a good hand, who can spell correctly, and who thoroughly understands arithmetic and geography. As Carlos is particularly deficient in all these respects, he can be of no service whatever in our store.

"Yours respectfully,

"B. M.

"Boston, Jan. 1, 1851."

The merchant then calls upon Henry's father and says to him,

"I have come to inquire if we can get your son to be a clerk in our store. We want a good boy, and are disposed to do well by him. There are enough boys to be had, such as they are; but I have been to the school, and have received such an account of Henry that I am satisfied that he is just such a boy as we need."

The father replies, "There is no situation I can think of, that I should prefer for my son, to that you now offer him. But I feel rather re-

luctant to take him from school just now. He is very much interested in his studies, and is, I believe, making rapid progress. And yet the situation which you offer him is so very desirable a one, that I feel much hesitation in declining it."

"We find no difficulty," continues the merchant, "in getting a boy. There are hundreds to be had. But a really good boy is one of the most scarce articles in the market. I am satisfied that your son Henry will make a first-rate man. He is the very person we want. And though there are many gentlemen who would be glad to put their sons into our store without any compensation, we will give your son his board. And I will take special pains that he may have some time for his studies. In a few years I shall wish to retire from active business, and if Henry continues faithful, as I doubt not he will, we shall be very glad then to take him in as a partner."

Henry goes into the store an active, respected, happy boy. Carlos continues to mope and doze over his books at school, eating apples behind his desk, cutting fly-cages, and throwing paper balls.

A few years pass away, and Henry becomes an honorable and influential merchant. He

sees a ragged handcartman in the street, and gives him a shilling to carry a package of goods to the wharf. The voice of the handcartman sounds familiar to him, and as he looks him in



THE HANDCARTMAN.

the face, he detects the features of idle, lazy Carlos.

This is the tendency of idleness and industry, the world over. He who is neglecting his studies at school, is putting a clog upon himself which will fetter him as long as he lives.

Every day that he is idle, every hour in which he is indolent, is exerting an influence to retard his prosperity through the whole of his life. It matters not in what business he may afterward engage—the idle school-boy will always have occasion, in manhood, to regret his wasted time.

If you are idle in your youth and afterward enter one of the learned professions, as a clergyman, a lawyer, a physician, you can never regain the hours lost in school. You will always be less respected and less successful than you otherwise would have been. If you become a merchant, you will have a weaker mind, and a more feeble judgment. Your standing in the mercantile community will be lower than it would have been, had you improved the period of your youth. If you become a farmer, you will find yourself less qualified to understand and appreciate improvements made in agricultural science; your land will be more poorly tilled, and your influence over the schools and in the general business of the town will be diminished in consequence of the misimprovement of your school-boy days.

Youth is the time for study. We have then nothing else to do but to learn. But in after-life there are ten thousand cares and duties

pressing upon us, which render it almost impossible to repair the injury of a neglected education. If you, therefore, would be a useful man, you must be a studious boy. If you would be successful and happy in the business of life, you must improve your time in school.

Consider for a moment the consequence of neglecting the one study of arithmetic. Every day, perhaps, in after-life, you will have money becoming due to you or from you, requiring a payment to be made. Even in your own private concerns, your accounts will be much involved, and it will require no inconsiderable expertness at figures to do justice to others and save yourself from loss. Every load of wood that you buy; every pound of flour, or sugar, or meat you purchase, will put to the test your powers as an arithmetician. If you enter into employment in a store, or in a bank; in a stage-office, or at a railroad station; if you become a mechanic or a farmer: whatever in a word your occupation may be, you will continually have occasion for a skillful use of figures. And if you do not now, every day, study diligently in school, and try to become a good scholar, you will have cause to regret it as long as you live.

And so it is with every other study that you

pursue at school—with writing, reading, spelling, geography, and grammar. Are you willing, when you become a man, to write such a miserable hand, that hardly any one can read it, and that the person to whom you write shall laugh at your ignorance, as he finds half the words misspelled? Are you willing to be so ignorant of grammar, that, when you talk with well-instructed men, they shall see that you are a poor ignorant creature, and do not know how to talk, even in your own language? Are you willing to be so ignorant of geography, as to know almost nothing about this world in which you dwell, and to expose yourself to the ridicule of doing something as preposterous as sending a cargo of skates to the West Indies, or warming pans to Ceylon, or furs to the North-West coast?

And do not think that it will require less self-denial hereafter, to resist indolence and the love of play, than it now does. If you now acquire habits of idleness, it will be almost impossible to overcome them. Your future success in life depends very much upon the habits of study you now acquire.

And besides, the time you can have for constant study is very rapidly passing away. Soon your time will be all occupied by business, and

your mind filled with the perplexities and cares of life. When you awake in the morning, you must go immediately to the toil of the day. And you will return home at night, so exhausted with labor, that it will be almost impossible for you to apply your mind to study. If you are ever to know any thing about arithmetic, grammar, writing, and geography, now is your time to learn. If you do not wish to be an ignorant man—so ignorant that you can have no influence over your fellow-men—so ignorant as to have all situations of profit and respectability shut against you, you must diligently improve your time now.

Again, I beg you to consider, what business can an ignorant man do? He can dig clams; he can shovel mud from the docks, or dig railroads and canals; he can be a common sailor, clothed in rags and daubed with tar, and spend his life in the dirty forecastle of a ship.

Are you willing to live so, with no refined friends, with no pleasant home, and cheerful fireside? Are you willing to live a ragged and houseless wanderer, with none to love you, or care for you? But so, in all probability, you must live, if you pass your youth in idleness. There is no post of respectability, or of profit, to which you can attain without education. If

you would be the captain of a ship, or a clerk in a counting-room, or an engineer upon a railroad, or a skillful mechanic, or a respectable farmer, you must have learning. And the better your education, the better you will be prepared to discharge any of these duties.

About twenty years ago, there was a boy in school, whose name I will call Harlo. He was twelve years old. He had naturally a good mind, and might have made a good scholar. But he was idle in the extreme. Sometimes you would see him asleep in school, and sometimes in mischief, trying to disturb the studies of others. If you looked into his desk, you would find it all in disorder, and the bottom covered with acorn shells. He would spend more time in school in catching flies, and cutting out cages for them, than in all his studies. His instructor did every thing in his power to induce him to study, but all in vain.

This idle boy used to say, that he cared nothing about his books, for he intended to be a sailor, and it was not necessary for a sailor to be a scholar.

A few years passed rapidly away, and the time came for him to leave school. He had learned nothing. In fact, he had done worse than learn nothing, for he had acquired such

habits of idleness, and thus had so enfeebled the energies of his mind, that it would be hardly possible for him in after-life to change them.

His father, seeing that he was throwing away his time, and that he was deriving no possible advantage from going to school, took him away, and obtained a situation for him as a cabin-boy, on board a coasting vessel. Here poor Harlo had hard times. He had to sweep the cabin, and be a waiter for the cook, and run at the bidding of every sailor on board. He had the poorest food to eat, and the unfeeling sailors would often drive him about, accompanied with oaths and blows. They would make him climb the shrouds, and, when he was almost terrified to death, with fear of falling from the giddy height, they would shake the shrouds, and shout, in cruel and boisterous laughter, at his terror.



THE SAILOR-BOY.

Poor Harlo had no bed to sleep upon.

When night came, he wrapped himself in an old blanket, and lay down in his berth in the close and smoky cabin. Frequently, as he thought of home and contrasted the comforts which he enjoyed there with his present hard lot, he cried himself to sleep. But there poor Harlo was. There seemed to be no help for him. He could not get into any other business, because he was so ignorant. After going to sea several years, as a common sailor, and finding that he had not enough education to rise from that low condition, he thought that he would go to school again, and study arithmetic and navigation. He was then more than twenty years old, a full-grown man. But he found that he had so long indulged himself in indolence, that he could not apply his mind; and, after a month or two of unavailing effort, he gave up in despair, and returned to face the storms and tempests of the ocean, "before the mast." O, how bitterly did he lament that he did not improve his school-boy days! for in that case he might have become the captain of a ship, instead of being a poor sailor, and might have acquired property so as to have a pleasant home on shore. But now he must probably work hard, and be poor till he dies, and then be buried in the ocean.

Thus his being idle during the few years he went to school, is the occasion of poverty and sorrow during his whole life.

You, my young reader, are now enjoying the rich privileges of your school-boy days. Your parents or friends are making great efforts to give you the best advantages, that you may be well instructed, and thus be prepared for future usefulness and happiness. Your teachers are doing every thing in their power, to secure your progress in your studies. You sometimes speak unkindly of your teachers, and think they deal hardly with you, because they insist upon your studying diligently and committing your lessons well. They do this because they love you, and wish to see you hereafter respected and happy. They know that if you are idle now, it will be a terrible calamity to you till you die.

You should ever remember too that your teacher is one of your best friends and benefactors. You should always speak of him with respect and affection. And if you will resolve to improve diligently your time, to resist the temptation which idle boys will hold out to you, your hours will glide away pleasantly in school, you will daily increase in knowledge, and as long as you live, you will rejoice that you were a studious school-boy.

CHAPTER X.

TRAITS OF CHARACTER.

Let us now consider some of the particular traits of character that good children ought to endeavor to acquire.

1. *Forgiveness.*—We say in the Lord's Prayer, Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. We thus pray that God will exercise the same kind of forgiveness toward us, which we exercise toward others. Consequently, if we are unforgiving or revengeful, we pray that God will treat us in the same way when we appear before him in judgment. Thus God teaches the necessity of cultivating a forbearing and a forgiving spirit. We must do this or we can not be Christians.

When I was a boy, there was another little boy who went to the same school with me, who was a professed Christian. He seemed to love the Savior, and to try in all things to abstain from sin. Some of the bad boys were in the habit of ridiculing him, and of doing every thing

they could to tease him, because he would not join with them in mischief. Near the school-house there was a small orchard; and the scholars would, without the leave of the owner, take the apples. One day a party of boys were going into the orchard for fruit, and called upon this pious boy to accompany them.



THE ORCHARD.

"Come, Henry," said one of them to him, "let us go and get some apples."

"The apples are not ours," he fearlessly replied, "and I do not think it right to steal."

"You are a coward, and afraid to go," the other replied.

"I am afraid," said Henry, "to do wrong, and *you* ought to be; but I am not afraid to do right."

This wicked boy was exceedingly irritated at this rebuke, and called Henry all manner of names, and endeavored to hold him up to the ridicule of the whole school.

Henry bore it very patiently, though it was hard to be endured, for the boy who ridiculed him had a great deal of influence and talent.

Some days after this the boys were going a-fishing. Henry had a beautiful fishing-rod, which his father had bought for him.

George—for by that name I shall call the boy who abused Henry—was very desirous of borrowing this fishing-rod, and yet was ashamed to ask for it. At last, however, he summoned courage, and called out to Henry upon the playground—

"Henry, will you lend me your rod to go a-fishing?"

"O yes," said Henry; "if you will go home with me, I will get it for you now."

Poor George felt ashamed enough for what

he had done. But he went home with Henry to get the rod.

They went up into the barn together, and when Henry had taken his fishing-tackle from the place in which he kept it, he said to George, "I have a new line in the house, which father bought me the other day; you may have that too, if you want it." George could hardly hold up his head, he felt so ashamed. However, Henry went and got the new line, and placed it upon the rod, and gave them into George's hand.

A few days after this, George told me about it. "Why," said he, "I never felt so ashamed in my life. And one thing is certain, I will never call Henry hard names again."

Now, who does not admire the conduct of Henry in this affair? This forgiving spirit is what God requires. The child who would be the friend of God, must possess this spirit. You must always be ready to forgive. You must never indulge in the feelings of revenge. You must never desire to injure another, how much soever you may feel that others have injured you. The spirit of the Christian is a forgiving spirit.

2. *Doing Good.* God also requires of his friends that they shall ever be employed doing

good, as they have opportunity. The Christian child will do all in his power to make those happy who are about him. He will disregard himself that he may promote the happiness of others. He will be obliging to all.

This world is not your home. You are to remain here but a few years, and then go to that home of joy or woe, which you never, never will leave. God expects you to be useful here. "How can I do any good?" do you say? Why, in many ways. You can make your parents happy; that is doing good. You can make your brothers and sisters happy; that is doing good. You can try to make your brothers and sisters more obedient to their parents; that is doing good. You can set a good example at school; that is doing good. If you see your companions doing any thing that is wrong, you can try to dissuade them. You can speak to your friend upon the Savior's goodness, and endeavor to excite in his heart the feelings which are in yours. Thus you may be exerting a good influence upon all around you. Your life will not be spent in vain. God will smile upon you, and give joy in a dying hour.

3. *Cheerfulness.* Some children appear to

think that if they are Christians, they can not be so happy as they may be if they are not Christians. They think that to love God, and to pray, and to do their duty, is gloomy work. But God tells us that none can be happy but those who love him. And every one who has repented of sin, and loves the Savior, says that there is more happiness in this mode of life than in any other. We may indeed be happy a little while without piety. But misfortunes and sorrows will come. Your hopes of pleasure will be disappointed. You will be called to weep; to suffer pain; to die. And there is nothing but religion which can give you a happy life and a peaceful death. It is that you may be happy, not unhappy, that God wishes you to be a Christian.

It is true that at times it requires a very great struggle to take a decided stand as a Christian. The proud heart is reluctant to yield. The worldly spirit clings to worldly pleasure. It requires bravery and resolution to meet the obstacles which will be thrown in your way. You may be opposed. You may be ridiculed. But, notwithstanding all this, the only way to insure happiness is to love and serve your Maker. Many children know that they ought to love God, and wish that they had resolution to do

their duty. But they are afraid of the ridicule of their companions. Henry, who would not rob the orchard, was a brave boy. He knew that the others would laugh at him. But what did he care for that? He determined to do his duty without being frightened if others did laugh. And the consciousness of doing his duty afforded him much greater enjoyment than he could possibly have received from eating the stolen fruit.

Others of the boys went and robbed the orchard, because they had not courage to refuse to do as their companions did. They knew that it was wrong, but they were afraid of being laughed at. But which is the most easy to be borne, the ridicule of the wicked, or a condemning conscience, and the displeasure of God? It is so with all the duties of the Christian. If you will conscientiously do that which God approves, he will give you peace of mind, and prepare you for eternal joy.

One of the most eminent and useful of the English clergymen was led, when a child, by the following interesting circumstance, to surrender himself to the Savior. When a little boy, he was, like other children, playful and thoughtless. He thought, perhaps, that he would wait until he was old, before he became

a Christian. His father was a pious man, and frequently conversed with him about heaven, and urged him to prepare to die.

On the evening of his birth-day, when he was ten years of age, his father took him affectionately by the hand, and reminding him of the scenes through which he had already passed, urged him to commence that evening a life of piety. He told him of the love of Jesus. He told him of the danger of delay. And he showed him that he must perish forever unless he speedily trusted in the Savior, and gave his life to his service. As this child thought of a dying hour, and of a Savior's love, his heart was full of feeling, and the tears gushed into his eyes. He felt that it was time for him to choose whether he would live for God or for the world. He resolved that he would no longer delay.

His father and mother then retired to their chamber to pray for their child, and this child also went to his chamber to pray for himself. Sincerely he gave himself to the Savior. Earnestly he implored forgiveness, and most fervently entreated God to aid him to keep his resolutions and to refrain from sin. And do you think that child was not happy, as, in the silence of his chamber, he surrendered himself

to God? It was undoubtedly the hour of the purest enjoyment he ever had experienced. Angels looked with joy upon that evening scene, and hovered with delight and love around that penitent child. The prayers of the parent and the child ascended as grateful incense to the throne, and were accepted.

From that hour, this boy went on in the path which leads to usefulness, and peace, and heaven. He spent his life in doing good. A short time since, he died a veteran soldier of the cross, and is now undoubtedly amid the glories of heaven, surrounded by hundreds, who have been, by his instrumentality, led to those green fields and loved mansions. Oh, what a rapturous meeting must that have been, when the parents of this child pressed forward from the angel throng, to welcome him, as, with triumphant wing, he entered heaven! And, oh, how happy must they now be, in that home of songs and everlasting joy!

It is thus that piety promotes our enjoyment. It promotes our happiness at all times. It takes away the fear of death, and deprives every sorrow of half its bitterness. Death is the most gloomy thought that can enter the minds of those who are not Christians. But the pious child can be happy even when dying. I was

once called to see a boy who was very dangerously sick, and expected soon to die. I expected to have found him sorrowful. But, instead of that, a happy smile was on his countenance, which showed that joy was in his heart. He sat in bed, leaning upon his pillow, with a hymn-book in his hand, which he was reading. His cheeks were thin and pale, from his long sickness, while at the same time, he appeared contented and happy. After conversing with him a little while, I said,

"Do you think you shall ever get well again?"

"No, sir," he cheerfully replied, "the doctor says I may perhaps live a few weeks, but that he should not be surprised if I should die at any time."

"Are you willing to die?" I said.

"O yes, sir," he answered; "sometimes I feel sad about leaving father and mother. But then I think I shall be free from sin in heaven, and shall be with the Savior. And I hope that father and mother will soon come to heaven, and I shall be with them then. I am sometimes afraid that I am too impatient to go."

"What makes you think," I asked, "that you are prepared to die?"

He hesitated a moment, and then said,

"Because Jesus Christ has said, Whosoever cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. I do think that I love the Savior, and I wish to go to him, and to be made holy."

While talking with him, I heard some boys laughing and playing under the window. But this sick boy looked up to me and said, "Oh, how much more happy am I now, than I used to be when well and out at play, not thinking of God or heaven! There is not a boy in the street so happy as I."

This boy had for some time been endeavoring to do his duty as a Christian. His conduct showed that he loved the Savior. And when sickness came, and death was near, he was happy. But, oh, how sad must that child feel, who is dying in unrepented sin! We all must certainly soon die, and there is nothing to make us happy in death but piety.

But when the Christian child goes to heaven, how happy must he be! He rises above the clouds, and the blue sky, and the twinkling stars, till he enters the home of God and the angels. There he becomes an angel himself. God is his approving Father. Angels are his beloved friends. You often, in a clear evening, look up upon the distant stars, and wonder who inhabits them. You think, if you had the wings

of an eagle, you would love to fly up there, and make a visit. Now, it is not improbable that the Christian, in heaven, can pass from star to star, as you can go from house to house in your own neighborhood. The very thought is enrapturing.

If every hour of our lives were spent in sorrow, it would be nothing, compared with the joys which God has promised his friends at his right hand. When we think of the green pastures of heaven; of the still waters of that happy world; when we think of mingling with the angels in their flight; of uniting our voices with theirs in songs of praise; of gazing upon all the glories and sharing all the rapture of the heavenly world—O, how tame do the joys of earth appear!

4. *Be mindful of the uncertainty of life.* Some children think that they can put off becoming Christians till a dying hour, and then repent and be saved. Even if you could do this, it would be at the loss of much usefulness and much happiness. But the fact is, you are never certain of a moment of life. You are little aware of the dangers to which you are continually exposed.

"The rising morning can't assure,
That we shall end the day;

For death stands ready at the door,
To snatch our lives away."

We are reminded of the uncertainty of life, by the accidents which are every day occurring. Often, when we least suspect it, we are in the most imminent hazard of our lives. When I was a boy, I one day went a-gunning. I was to call for another boy, who lived at a little distance from my father's. Having loaded my gun with a heavy charge of pigeon-shot, and put in a new flint, which would strike out



THE GUN.

a brilliant shower of sparks, I carefully primed the gun, and set out upon my expedition. When I arrived at the house of the boy who was to go with me, I leaned the gun against the side of the house, and waited a few moments for him to get ready. About a rod from the door, where I was waiting, there was another house. A little girl stood upon the window-seat, looking out of the window. Another boy came along, and, taking up the gun, not knowing that it was loaded and primed, took deliberate aim at the face of the girl, and pulled the trigger. But God, in mercy, caused the gun to miss fire. Had it gone off, the girl would have been killed. I never can think of the danger she was in, even now, without trembling.

The girl did not see the boy take aim at her, and does not now know how narrow was her escape from death. She little supposed that, when standing in perfect health by the window in her own father's house, she was in danger of dropping down dead upon the floor. We are all continually exposed to such dangers, and when we least suspect it, may be in the greatest peril. Is it not, then, folly to delay preparation for death? You may die within one hour. You may not have one moment of warning allowed you.

A few years ago, a boy was riding in the stage. It was a pleasant summer's day. The horses were trotting rapidly along by fields, and bridges, and orchards, and houses. The boy stood at the coach-window with a happy heart, and looked upon the green fields and pleasant dwellings; upon the poultry in the farm-yards, and the cattle upon the hills. He had not the least idea that he should die that day. But while he was looking out of the window, the iron rim of the wheel broke, and struck him upon the forehead. The poor boy lay senseless for a few days, and then died.

There are a thousand ways by which life may be suddenly extinguished, and yet how seldom are they thought of by children! They almost always entirely forget the danger of early death, and postpone to a future day making their peace with God. And how little do those who read this book think that they may die suddenly! Many children when they go to bed at night, say the prayer,

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

I used to say this prayer, when a child, every

night before I went to sleep. But I did not know then, as well as I do now, that I might die before the morning. Almost every night some children go to bed well, and before morning are dead. It is, therefore, very dangerous to delay repentance. Love the Savior immediately, and prepare to die, and it will be of but little consequence when you die, for you will go to heaven and be happy forever.

But we must not forget that a most terrible doom awaits those who will not serve their Maker. It matters not how much we may be beloved by our friends; how amiable may be our feelings. This alone will not save us. We must repent of sin, and love the Savior, who has suffered for us. We must pass our lives in usefulness and prayer, or, when the day of judgment comes, we shall hear the sentence, "Depart from me, for I know you not." It is indeed a fearful thing to refuse affection and obedience to our Father in heaven. He will receive none into his happy family above, but those who love him. He will have no angry, disagreeable spirits there. He will receive none but the penitent, and the humble, and the grateful, to that pure and peaceful home. Who does not wish to go to heaven! O, then, now begin to do your duty, and earnestly pray that God

will forgive your sins, and give you a heart to love and obey him.

These thoughts must be often in your mind it is true, but still if you have really given your heart to God, they will not make you gloomy. You must not allow them to make you gloomy, for if your peace is made with God all will surely be well with you in the end, and you may therefore be cheerful and happy every day.

5. *Be amiable and kind.* Every child must observe how much more happy and beloved some children appear to be than others. There are some children you always love to be with. They are happy themselves, and they make you happy. There are others whose society you always avoid. The very expression of their countenances produces unpleasant feelings. They seem to have no friends.

No person can be happy without friends. The heart is formed for love, and can not be happy without the opportunity of giving and receiving affection.

"It's not in titles, nor in rank,
It's not in wealth like London bank,
To make us truly blest.
If happiness have not her seat
And center in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest."

But you can not be an object of affection from others, unless you feel affection for them in your turn. You can not find others to love you, unless you will also love them. Love is only to be obtained by giving love in return. Hence the importance of cultivating a kind and obliging disposition. You can not be happy without it. I have sometimes heard a girl say,

"I know that I am very unpopular at school."

Now, this is generally saying that she is very disobliging and unamiable in her disposition. If your companions do not love you, it is probably your own fault. They can not help loving you if you will be kind and friendly. If you are not loved, it is good evidence that you do not deserve to be loved. It is true that a sense of duty may at times render it necessary for you to do that which is displeasing to your companions. But if it is seen that you have a noble spirit; that you are above selfishness; that you are willing to make sacrifices of your own personal convenience to promote the happiness of your associates, you will never be in want of friends. You must not regard it as your misfortune that others do not love you, but your fault. It is not beauty, it is not wealth, that will give you friends. Your heart must glow with kindness if you would attract to yourself

the esteem and affection of those by whom you are surrounded.

You are little aware how much the happiness of your whole life depends upon your cultivating an affectionate and obliging disposition. If you will adopt the resolution that you will confer favors whenever you have an opportunity, you will certainly be surrounded by ardent friends. Begin upon this principle in childhood, and act upon it through life, and you will make yourself happy, and promote the happiness of all within your influence.

You go to school, for example, in a cold winter morning. A bright fire is blazing upon the hearth, which is surrounded with boys struggling to get near it to warm themselves. After you get partly warmed, another schoolmate comes in suffering with the cold.

"Here, James," you pleasantly call out to him, "I am warm; you may have my place."

As you slip one side to allow him to take your place at the fire, will he not feel that you are kind? The worst boy in the world can not help admiring such generosity. And even though he be so ungrateful as not to return the favor, you may depend upon it that he will be your friend, as far as he is capable of friend-

ship. If you will habitually act upon this principle, you will never want for friends.

Suppose some day you are out with your companions playing ball. After you have been playing for some time, another boy comes to the ground. He can not be chosen on either side; for there is no one to match him.

"Henry," you say, "you may take my place a little while, and I will rest."

You throw yourself down upon the grass, while Henry, fresh and vigorous, takes your bat, and engages in the game. He knows that you gave up to accommodate him. And how can he help liking you for it? The fact is, that neither man nor child can cultivate such a spirit of generosity and kindness, without awakening affection and esteem. Look and see who of your companions have the most friends, and you will find that they are those who have this noble spirit; who are willing to deny themselves, that they may make their associates happy. This is not peculiar to childhood, but is the same in all periods of life. There is but one way to make friends, and that is by being friendly to others.

Perhaps some child who reads this, feels conscious of being disliked, and yet desires to have the affection of companions. You ask me

what you shall do. I will tell you what. I will give you an infallible recipe. *Do all in your power to make others happy. Be willing to make sacrifices of your own convenience, that you may promote the happiness of others.* This is the way to make friends, and the only way. When you are playing with your brothers and sisters at home, be always ready to give them more than their share of privilege and enjoyment. Manifest an obliging disposition, and they can not but regard you with affection. In all your intercourse with others, at home or abroad, let these feelings influence you, and you will receive the rich reward of devoted friends.

The very exercise of these feelings brings enjoyment. The benevolent man is a cheerful man. His family is happy. His home is the abode of the purest earthly joy. These feelings are worth cultivating, for they bring with them their own reward. Benevolence is the spirit of heaven.

CHAPTER XI.

TRAITS OF CHARACTER—CONTINUED.

THERE are several other traits of character, besides those pointed out in the last chapter, to which it is important to direct the reader's attention.

1. *Be good-natured.* Persons of ardent dispositions often find it exceedingly difficult to control themselves when vexed. Some little occurrence irritates them, and they speak hastily and angrily. Offended with a companion, they will do things to give pain, instead of pleasure. You must have your temper under control if you would exercise a friendly disposition. A bad temper is an infirmity, which, if not restrained, will be continually growing worse and worse.

There was a man, a few years since, tried for murder. When a boy, he gave loose to his passions. The least opposition would rouse his anger, and he made no efforts to subdue himself. He had no one who could love him. If

he was playing with others, he would every moment be getting irritated. As he grew older, his passions increased, and he became so ill-natured that every one avoided him. One day as he was talking with another man, he became so enraged at some little provocation, that he seized a club, and with one blow laid the man lifeless at his feet. But while in prison the fury of a malignant and ungoverned spirit increased to such a degree that he became a maniac. It seemed as if the very fires of the world of woe were burning in his heart. Loaded with chains, and immured in a dark dungeon, he was doomed to pass the miserable remnant of his guilty life in wretchedness and despair, the victim of his ungovernable passion.

This is a very unusual case. But nothing is more common than for a child to destroy his own peace, and to make his brothers and sisters continually unhappy by indulging in a peevish and irritable spirit. Nothing is more common than for a child to cherish this disposition until he becomes a man, and then by his peevishness and fault-finding, he destroys the happiness of all who are near him. His home is the scene of discord. His family are made wretched.

An amiable disposition makes its possessor happy. And if you would have such a disposi-

tion, you must learn to control yourself. If others injure you, obey the gospel rule, and do them good in return. If they revile you, speak kindly to them. It is far better to suffer injury than to inflict injury. If you will endeavor in childhood in this way to control your passions, to be always mild, and forbearing, and forgiving, you will disarm opposition, and, in many cases, convert enemies to friends. You will be beloved by those around you, and when you have a home of your own, your cheerful and obliging spirit will make it a happy home.

One thing you may be sure of. There can be no real happiness when there is not an amiable disposition. You can not more surely make yourself wretched, than by indulging in an irritable spirit. Love is the feeling which fills every angel's bosom ; and it is the feeling which should fill every human heart. It is love which will raise us to the angel's throne. It is malice which will sink us to the demon's dungeon. I hope that every child who reads this, will be persuaded, by these remarks, immediately to commence the government of his temper. Resolve that you never will be angry. If your brother or your sister does any thing which has a tendency to provoke you, restrain your feelings, and speak mildly and softly. Let

no provocation draw from you an angry or an unkind word. If you will commence in this way, and persevere, you will soon get that control over yourself that will contribute greatly to your happiness. Your friends will increase, and you will be prepared for far more extensive usefulness in the world.

And is there not something noble in being able to be always good-natured, calm, and pleasant? I once saw two men conversing in the streets. One became very unreasonably enraged with the other. In the fury of his anger, he appeared like a madman. He addressed the other in language the most abusive and insulting. The gentleman whom he thus abused, with a pleasant countenance and a calm voice, said to him, "Now, my friend, you will be sorry for all this when your passion is over. This language does me no harm, and can do you no good."

Now is it not really magnanimous to have such a spirit? Every person who witnessed this interview despised the angry man, and respected the one who was so calm and self-possessed.

2. *Humility.* Humility is another very important trait of character, which should be cul-

tivated in early life. What can be more disgusting than the ridiculous airs of a vain child? Sometimes you will see a foolish girl tossing her head about, and walking with a mincing step, which shows you at once that she is excessively vain. She thinks that others are admiring her, when the fact is, they are laughing at her ridiculous airs, and despising her. Every one speaks of her as a very simple, vain girl.

Vanity is a sure sign of weakness of mind; and if you indulge in so contemptible a passion, you will surely be the subject of ridicule and contempt.

A young lady was once passing an afternoon at the house of a friend. As she, with one or two gentlemen and ladies, was walking in the garden, she began to make a display of her fancied learning. She would look at a flower, and with great self-sufficiency talk of its botanical characteristics. She thought that the company were all wondering at the extent of her knowledge, when they were all laughing at her, as a self-conceited girl who had not sense enough to keep herself from appearing ridiculous. The gentlemen were casting glances at each other, and slyly laughing as she uttered one learned word after another, with an affected air of familiarity with scientific terms.

During the walk, she took occasion to bring in all the little that she knew, and at one time ventured to quote Latin for their edification. She thought she had produced quite an impression upon their minds. And, in truth, she had. She had fixed indelibly the impression that she was an insufferably weak and self-conceited girl. She made herself the laughing-stock of the whole company. The moment that she was gone, there was one general burst of laughter. And not one of those gentlemen or ladies could ever think of that vain girl afterward, without emotions of contempt.

This is the invariable effect of vanity. You can not so disguise it, but that it will be detected, and cover you with disgrace. There is no foible more common than this, and there is none more supremely ridiculous.

One boy happens to have rich parents, and he acts as if he supposed that there was some virtue in his father's money which pertained to him. He goes to school and struts about, as though he were lord of the play-ground. Now, every body who sees this, says, it is a proof that the boy has not much mind. He is a simple boy. If he had good sense he would perceive that others of his playmates, in many qualities surpassed him, and that it became him to be

humble and unostentatious. The mind that is truly great is humble.

We dislike vanity wherever it appears. Go into a school-room, and look around upon the appearance of the various pupils assembled there. You will perhaps see one girl, with head inclined toward one shoulder, and with a simpering countenance, trying to look pretty. You speak to her. Instead of receiviug a plain, kind, honest answer, she replies with voice, and language, and attitude full of affectation. She thinks that she is exciting your admiration. But, on the contrary, she is exciting disgust and loathing.

You see another girl, whose frank and open countenance proclaims a sincere and honest heart. All her movements are natural. She manifests no desire to attract attention. The idea of her own superiority seems not to enter her mind. As, in the recess, she walks about the school-room, you can detect no airs of self-conceit. She is kind and attentive to all her associates. You ask her some question. She answers you with modesty and without ostentation. Now, this girl, without any effort to attract admiration, is beloved and admired. Every one sees at once that she is a girl of good sense. She knows too much to be vain. She

will never want for friends. This is the kind of character which insures usefulness and happiness.

A little girl who had rich parents, and was handsome in personal appearance, was very vain of her beauty and of her father's wealth. She disgusted all her school-mates by her conceit. And though she seemed to think that every one ought to admire her, she was beloved by none. She at last left school, a vain, conceited girl. A young man, who was so simple as to fall in love with this piece of pride and affectation, at length married her. For a few years, the property which she received from her father supported them. But soon her father died, and her husband grew dissipated, and before long their property was all squandered.

She had no friends to whom she could look for assistance, and she and her husband were every month sinking deeper and deeper in poverty. Her husband fell into bad habits, and at last became a perfect sot, and staggered through the streets in the lowest state of degradation. At length he died, and she was left with one or two small children, and without any means of support. In a most miserable hovel this poor woman was compelled to take up her residence. By this time her pride had experienced a fall

She no longer exhibited the airs of a vain girl, but was an afflicted and helpless woman.

The sorrow and disgrace into which she was plunged by the intemperance and death of her husband, preyed so deeply upon her feelings as to destroy her health, and in this condition she was carried to the poor-house. There she lingered out the last few years of her sad earthly existence. What a termination of life for a vain and haughty girl! And what a lesson is this to all, to be humble and unassuming! You may be in health to-day, and in sickness to-morrow. This year you may be rich, and have need of nothing, and the next year you may be in the most abject poverty. Your early home may be one of luxury and elegance, and in your dying hour you may be in the poor-house, without a friend to watch at your bedside. Is it not, then, the height of folly to indulge in vanity?

If any child will look around upon his own companions, he will see that those are most beloved and respected who have no disposition to claim superiority over their associates. How pleasant is it to be in company with those who are conciliating and unassuming! But how much is every one disgusted with the presence of those who assume airs of importance, and

are continually saying, by their conduct, that they think themselves deserving particular attention! No one regrets to see such self-conceit humbled. When such persons meet with misfortune, no one appears to regret it, no one sympathizes with them.

You must guard against this contemptible vice, if you would be useful, or respected, or happy. If you would avoid exciting disgust, avoid vanity. If you do not wish to be the laughing-stock of all your acquaintance, do not let them detect in you consequential airs. If you would not be an object of hatred and dislike, beware how you indulge feelings of fancied superiority. Be plain, and sincere, and honest-hearted. Disgrace not yourself by affectation and pride. Let all your words and all your actions show that you think no more highly of yourself than you ought to think. Then will others love you. They will rejoice at your prosperity. And they will be glad to see you rising in the world, in usefulness and esteem.

3. *Moral Courage.* Moral courage is a trait of character of the utmost importance to be possessed. A man was once challenged to fight a duel. As he thought of his own condition if he should kill his adversary, and of his widowed

wife and orphan children, if he should be shot himself—as he thought of his appearance before the bar of God to answer for the atrocious sin, he shrunk from accepting the challenge. But when he thought of the ridicule to which he would be exposed if he declined; that others would call him a coward, and point at him the finger of scorn, he was afraid to refuse. He was such a coward that he did not dare to meet the ridicule of contemptible men. He had so little moral courage, that he had rather become a murderer, or expose himself to be shot, than boldly to disregard the opinions and the sneers of the unprincipled and base. It is this want of moral courage which very frequently leads persons to the commission of crimes.

There is nothing so hard to be borne as ridicule. It requires a bold heart to be ready to do one's duty, unmoved by the sneers of others. How often does a child do that which he knows to be wrong, because he is afraid that others will call him a coward if he does right!

The following example shows that a boy may do wrong simply because he is too great a coward to do right.

One cold winter's day, three boys were passing by a school-house. The oldest was a mis-



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chievous fellow, always in trouble himself, and trying to get others into trouble. The youngest, whose name was George, was a very amiable boy, who wished to do right, but was very deficient in moral courage. We will call the oldest Henry, and the other of the three James. The following dialogue passed between them.

Henry.—What fun it would be to throw a snow-ball against the school-room door, and make the teacher and scholars all jump!

James.—You would jump if you should. If the teacher did not catch you, he would tell your father, and you would get a whipping then, that would make you jump higher than the scholars, I think.

Henry.—Why, we could get so far off, before the teacher could come to the door, that he could not tell who we are. Here is a snow-

ball as hard as ice, and George had as lief throw it against that door as not.

James.—Give it to him and see. He would not dare to throw it against the door.

Henry.—Do you think George is a coward? You don't know him as well as I do. Here, George, take this snow-ball, and show James that you are not such a coward as he thinks you to be.

George.—I am not afraid to throw it. But I do not wish to. I do not see that it will do any good, or that there will be any fun in it.

James.—There, I told you he would not dare to throw it.

Henry.—Why, George, are you turning coward? I thought you did not fear any thing. We shall have to call you chicken-hearted. Come, save your credit, and throw it. I know you are not afraid to.

George.—Well, I am not afraid to. Give me the snow-ball. I had as lief throw it as not.

George took the snow-ball and threw it against the door; and the boys ran. Henry was laughing as heartily as he could to think what a fool he had made of George. George afterward got punished for his folly, as he richly deserved. He was such a coward that he was

afraid of being called a coward. He did not dare to refuse to do as Henry told him to do, for fear that he would be laughed at. If he had been really a brave boy, he would have said,

"Henry, do you suppose that I am such a fool as to throw that snow-ball just because you wish to have me do it? You may throw your own snow-balls, if you please."

Henry would perhaps, in this case, have tried to laugh at him. He would have called him a coward, hoping in this way to induce him to obey his wishes. But George would have replied,

"Do you think that I care for your laughing? I do not think it is right to throw a snow-ball against the school-room door. And I will not do that which I think to be wrong if the whole town join with you in laughing."

This would have been real moral courage. Henry would have seen at once, that it would do no good to laugh at a boy who had so bold a heart. And you must have this fearlessness of spirit, or you will be continually involved in trouble, and will deserve and receive contempt.

I once knew a man who had so little independence, that he hardly dared express an opinion different from that of those who for the time being happened to be with him. When

he was talking upon politics, he would agree with the persons with whom he happened to be conversing, no matter what their views, or what their party. He was equally fickle and undecided upon the subject of religion, differing from none, and agreeing with all. The consequence was, that he had the confidence of none and the contempt of all. He sunk into merited disgrace in the estimation of the whole community.

You must have an opinion of your own. And you must be ready, frankly and modestly, to express it, when occasion requires, without being intimidated by fear of censure. You can neither command respect nor be useful without it.

In things which concern your own personal convenience merely, you should be as yielding as the air. But where duty is concerned, you should be as firm and as unyielding as the rock. Be ever ready to sacrifice your own comfort to promote the comfort of others. Be conciliating and obliging in all your feelings and actions. Show that you are ready to do every thing in your power to make those around you happy. Let no one have occasion to say that you are stubborn and unaccommodating.

But, on the other hand, where duty is in-

volved, let nothing tempt you to do wrong. Be bold enough to dare to do right, whatever may be the consequences. If others laugh at your scruples, let them laugh as long as they please. And let them see that you are not to be frightened by their sneers. Your courage will often be tried. There will be occasions in which it will require a severe struggle to preserve your integrity. But ever remember that if you would do any good in the world, you must possess this moral courage. It is the want of this that leaves thousands to live in a way which their consciences reprove, and to die in despair. Unless you possess this trait of character, to some considerable degree, it can hardly be expected that you will ever become a Christian. You must learn to act for yourself, unintimidated by the censure, and unmoved by the flattery of others.

4. *Pure language.* Boys can not be too careful to avoid in early life forming bad habits in respect to their language. Nothing is more ungentlemanly than profaneness or indelicacy in speech.

When the American army were at their winter quarters in New Jersey, during the revolutionary war, General Washington one day invited his officers to dine with him. The

use of profane language was then very common in the army. One of the guests uttered at the table a profane expression. Washington suddenly laid upon the table his knife and fork, in such a way as to attract the attention of every guest, and, raising his hands, exclaimed, "I really thought that I had invited none but gentlemen to dine with me." The reproof was deeply felt, and exerted a very powerful influence in checking that vulgar and despicable vice.

How low and degrading is the vice of profane swearing! It is the language of pirates, of drunkards, of all the loathsome and the vile. The use of it always degrades one in the estimation of every person whose good opinion is worth having.

And how solemn is the thought that every sinful word is recorded in the book of God's remembrance! The day of judgment is fast approaching. For every idle word an account must be rendered to God. And no one in Christian lands can plead ignorance of his command, "Swear not at all."

Sometimes, as I have heard boys in the streets uttering the most awful oaths, it has almost made me tremble. I have thought, *God heard that oath.* He will never forget it. That

boy must yet answer for the dreadful sin, at the judgment-seat, in the presence of all angels and all men. O, how bitterly will he then lament, that he ever indulged in such sinful practices! And as he hears the doom, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," how agonizing will be his reproaches of himself, for disobeying God's known commands!

There is hardly any practice into which a boy can fall, so utterly ruinous to him, as the use of profane language. It seems to destroy all the fine sensibilities, all the best affections, all magnanimous feelings. Such a boy always looks mean and ashamed. He knows that he is doing something which is wrong, something which he is afraid to have his friends know, and consequently he loses all that frankness and ingenuousness which is the great charm of a virtuous youth.

This vice seems to lead to every other. It so deadens conscience, and makes one so reckless of every thing that is delicate and high-minded, that the profane boy is almost sure to grow up a profligate man. He will superadd all other vices to this; and drinking, and gambling, and every species of dissipation, will fill up the awful catalogue of his crimes.

The influence of this wicked practice is so

destructive of every thing estimable in character, that I think a boy who is in the habit of profaneness should be expelled from school without a moment's hesitancy. He ought to be banished from the play-ground, and from the society of every virtuous boy. God looks upon him with displeasure. And he is contaminating every one who associates with him.

I remember very well the first oath which was uttered by an early friend of mine, in his boyish days. He trembled after he had uttered it, and I was shocked beyond measure. It was not, however, his *last* oath. Having thus commenced, he soon acquired the habit, and before long he could utter the most awful imprecations, with the volubility and hardihood of a pirate.

Other sins, as usual, followed in the train of this low vice, and in a few years he was, to all appearance, irretrievably ruined.

O, beware of the use of profane language, and of every sinful, idle, indelicate word. Remember that God hears every thing you say, and you can not give utterance to a sinful or an impure word without destroying the delicacy of your feelings, and paving the way for your descent to ruin.

There is often conversation, among boys, of

an indelicate nature; conversation which you would be very unwilling that your father or mother should hear. Without great care you will in early life get your mind so poisoned and corrupted in this way, that it will be a calamity to you as long as you live. You will, during all the years of your manhood, have cause to mourn that such impure words and thoughts ever entered your mind. There is hardly any thing I have written in this book which I deem so important to your welfare and happiness as a caution upon this subject. You can not be too careful to avoid all such words and thoughts. I do entreat you, with the utmost earnestness, never to utter a word or an idea, which you would not be willing to repeat to your parents. You can now form no conception of the dreadful consequences of having an impure mind. It would be a far less calamity for you to lose a foot, or a hand, or an eye, than to lose delicacy and purity of mind.

When I think of the temptations to which you are exposed, in this respect; when I think of the bad boys, with corrupt hearts, you must inevitably meet, and the conversation you must almost unavoidably hear, I know not how, with sufficient earnestness, to warn you of your danger. If you are ever present where there is

conversation of this nature, escape if you possibly can. Resolve that you will not listen to that which conscience tells you to be wrong. Your conscience will be very faithful upon this subject. It warns loudly and earnestly whenever you approach the region of impropriety. If you allow yourself in this sin, you will not do it ignorantly, and you will suffer for it as long as you live. Many a Christian has been unable, even to a dying hour, to efface from his mind the corrupt impressions left there by impure boys.

If you have any associate addicted to improprieties of this kind, avoid him as you would the plague. Resolve that you will, at all hazards, break away from such influences. Let no temptation, be it ever so powerful, induce you to allow yourself in any sin of this kind. Ask yourself, when exposed to any language of an improper kind, Should I be willing to repeat this conversation to our assembled family, at the supper table? Do not listen to any stories, do not permit any conversation in your hearing, which has any indelicate allusions.

I have thus, in this and in the preceding chapters, enumerated the traits of character which a Christian child ought to endeavor to

acquire. One who conscientiously and perseveringly aims at acquiring them, will be continually advancing in all that is excellent and praiseworthy; and in the exercise of the amiable, gentle, humble, pure, and holy spirit, which the gospel enjoins, will be a blessing to himself and to all who know him.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

The counsels which this volume contains are intended to guide you in your duties while you remain under the parental roof. The years of your childhood are passing rapidly away, and they will soon be gone forever.

If you follow the counsels and injunctions which have been given you in the preceding chapters, the years of your childhood will pass happily. Your parents, brothers and sisters will love you. All who know you will regard you with a kind and friendly interest. You will feel an inward peace and satisfaction that will be a constant joy and blessing. Thus the years of your childhood will glide smoothly and peacefully away.

But soon you must leave parents, brothers, and sisters, and enter upon the duties and cares of life almost alone. How affecting will be the hour, when your footsteps turn from your father's dwelling, from your mother's care, to seek a



LEAVING HOME

new home among strangers! You now can not conceive the feelings which will press upon you as your father takes your hand to bid you the parting farewell, and your mother endeavors to hide her tears, as you depart from her watchful eye, to meet the temptations and sorrows of life. Your heart will then be full. Tears will fill your eyes. Emotion will choke your voice.

You will then reflect upon all the scenes of your childhood with feelings which you never had before. Every unkind word that you have uttered to your parents—every unkind look that you have given them, will cause you the sincerest sorrow. If you have any generous feeling remaining in your bosom, you will long to fall upon your knees and ask your parents' forgiveness for every pang that you may have caused their hearts.

The hour when you leave your home, and all

its joys, will be such an hour as you never have passed before. The feelings which will then oppress your heart, will remain with you for weeks and months. You will often, in the pensive hour of evening, sit down and weep, as you think of parents and home far away. Oh, how cold will seem the love of others, compared with a mother's love! How often will your thoughts fondly return to joys which have forever fled! Again and again will you think over the years that are past. Every recollection of affection and obedience will awaken joy in your heart. Every remembrance of ingratitude will awaken repentance and remorse.

O, then, think now of the time when you must bid father and mother, brothers and sisters, farewell. Think of the time when you must leave the fireside around which you have spent so many pleasant evenings, and go out into the wide world, with no other dependence than the character which you have formed at home. If this character be good, if you possess amiable and obliging and generous feelings, you may soon possess a home of your own, when the joys of your childhood will in some degree be renewed. And if you will pass your days in the service of God, imitating the character of the Savior, and cherishing the feelings of pen-

itence and love which the Bible requires, you will soon be in that happy home which is never to be forsaken. There, are joys from which you never will be separated. There, are friends, angels in dignity, and spotless in purity, in whose loved society you will find joys such as you never experienced while on earth.

Once when a son was leaving the roof of a pious father, to go out into the wide world to meet its temptations, and to battle with its storms, his heart was oppressed with the many emotions which were struggling there. The day had come in which he was to leave the fireside of so many enjoyments; the friends endeared to him by so many associations—so many acts of kindness. He was to bid adieu to his mother, that loved, loved benefactor, who had protected him in sickness, and rejoiced with him in health. He was to leave a father's protection, to go forth and act without an adviser, and rely upon his own unaided judgment. He was to bid farewell to brothers and sisters, no more to see them but as an occasional visitor at his paternal home. Oh, how cold and desolate did the wide world appear! How did he hesitate from lanching forth to meet its tempests and its storms!

But the hour had come for him to go; and

he must suppress his emotions, and triumph over his reluctance. He went from room to room, looking, as for the last time, upon those scenes, to which imagination would so often recur, and where it would love to linger. The well-packed trunk was in the entry, waiting the arrival of the stage. Brothers and sisters were moving about, hardly knowing whether to smile or to weep. The father sat at the window, humming a mournful air, as he was watching the approach of the stage which was to bear his son away to take his place far from home, in the busy crowd of a bustling world. The mother, with all the indescribable emotions of a mother's heart, was placing in a small bundle a few little comforts such as none but a mother could think of, and, with most generous resolution, endeavoring to preserve a cheerful countenance, that, as far as possible, she might preserve her son from unnecessary pain in the hour of departure.

"Here, my son," said she, "is a pair of stockings, which will be soft and warm for your feet. I have run the heels for you, for I am afraid you will not find any one who will quite fill a mother's place."

The poor boy was overflowing with emotion,

and did not dare to trust his voice with an attempt to reply.

"I have put a little piece of cake here, for you may be hungry on the road, and I will put it in the top of the bundle, so that you can get it without any difficulty. And in this needle-book I have put up a few needles and some thread, for you may at times want some little stitch taken, and you will have no mother or sister to go to."

The departing son could make no reply. He could restrain his emotion only by silence. At last the rumbling of the wheels of the stage was heard, and the four horses were reined up at the door. The boy endeavored, by activity, in seeing his trunk and other baggage properly placed, to gain sufficient fortitude to enable him to articulate his farewell. He, however, strove in vain. He took his mother's hand. The tear glistened for a moment in her eye, and then silently rolled down her cheek. He struggled with all his energy to say good-bye, but he could not. In unbroken silence he shook her hand, and then in silence received the adieus of brothers and sisters, as one after another took the hand of their departing companion. He then took the warm hand of his warm-hearted father. His father attempted to smile, but it was the struggling

smile of feelings which would rather have vented themselves in tears. For a moment he said not a word, but retained the hand of his son, as he accompanied him out of the door to the stage. After a moment's silence, pressing his hand, he said, "My son, you are now leaving us; you may forget your father and your mother, your brothers and your sisters, but, oh, do not forget your God!"

The stage door closed upon the boy. The crack of the driver's whip was heard, and the rumbling wheels bore him rapidly away from all the privileges and all the happiness of his early home. His feelings, so long restrained, now gave way, and, sinking back upon his seat, he enveloped himself in his cloak, and burst into tears.

Hour after hour the stage rolled on. Passengers entered and left; but the boy—perhaps I ought rather to call him the young man—was almost insensible to every thing that passed. He sat, in sadness and in silence, in the corner of the stage, thinking of the loved home he had left. Memory ran back through all the years of his childhood, lingering here and there, with pain, upon an act of disobedience, and recalling an occasional word of unkindness. All his life seemed to be passing in review before him, from

the first years of his conscious existence, to the hour of his departure from his home. Then would the parting words of his father ring in his ears. He had always heard the morning and evening prayer. He had always witnessed the power of religion exemplified in all the duties of life. And the undoubted sincerity of a father's language, confirmed as it had been by years of corresponding practice, produced an impression upon his mind too powerful ever to be effaced—"My son, you may forget father and mother, you may forget brothers and sisters, but, oh, do not forget your God." The words rung in his ears. They entered his heart. Again and again his thoughts ran back through the years he had already passed, and the reviving recollections brought fresh floods of tears. But still his thoughts ran on to his father's parting words, "Forget not your God." He resolved that in whatever circumstances he might afterwards be placed, he would never, never forget them.

It was midnight before the stage stopped, to give him a little rest. He was then more than a hundred miles from home. But still his father's words were ringing in his ears. He was conducted up several flights of stairs to a cham-



THE HOTEL.

ber in a crowded hotel. After a short prayer, he threw himself upon the bed, and endeavored to obtain a little sleep. But his excited imagination, even in his dreams, went back to the home he had left. Again he was seated by the fireside. Again he heard the soothing tones of his kind mother's voice, and sat by his father's side. In the vagaries of his dream, he again went through the scene of parting, and wept in his sleep as he bade adieu to brothers and sis-

ters, and heard a father's parting advice, "Oh, my son, forget not your God."

But little refreshment could be derived from such sleep. And indeed he had been less than an hour upon his bed, before some one knocked at the door, and placed a lamp in his room, saying, "It is time to get up, sir; the stage is almost ready to go." He hastily rose from his bed, and after imploring a blessing upon himself, and fervently commending to God his far-distant friends, now quietly sleeping in that happy home which he had left forever, he hastened down stairs, and soon again was rapidly borne on by the fleet horses of the mail-coach.

It was a clear autumnal morning. The stars shone brightly in the sky, and the thoughts of the lonely wanderer were irresistibly carried to that home beyond the stars, and to that God whom his father had so affectingly entreated him not to forget. He succeeded, however, in getting a few moments of troubled sleep, as the stage rolled on; but his thoughts were still reverting, whether asleep or awake, to the home left far behind. Just as the sun was going down by the western hills, at the close of the day, he alighted from the stage, in the village

of strangers, in which he was to find his new home.

There was not an individual in this place that he had ever seen before. Many a pensive evening did he pass, thinking of absent friends. Many a lonely walk did he take, while his thoughts were far away among the scenes of his childhood. And when the winter evenings came, with the cheerful blaze of the fireside, often did he think, with a sigh, of the loved and happy group encircling his father's fireside, and sharing those joys he had left forever.

But a father's parting words did not leave his mind. There they remained. And they, in connection with other events, rendered effectual by the Spirit of God, induced him to endeavor to consecrate his life to his Maker's service. In the hopes of again meeting beloved parents and friends in that home, which gilds the paradise above, he found that solace which could nowhere else be obtained, and was enabled to go on in the discharge of the duties of life, with serenity and peace.

Reader, you must soon leave your home, and leave it forever. The privileges and the joys you are now partaking, wlll soon pass away. And when you have gone forth into the wide world, and feel the want of a father's care, and

of a mother's love, then will all the scenes you have passed through, return freshly to your mind, and the remembrance of every unkind word, or look, or thought, will give you pain. Try, then, to be an affectionate and obedient child. Cultivate those virtues which will prepare you for usefulness and happiness in your maturer years, and above all, make it your object to prepare for that happy home above, where sickness can never enter, and sorrow can never come.

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